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ABSTRACT

The essays in this collection review information, resources, and guidelines on the basic principles of internal evaluations of school violence programs. This information can help staff with program definition, planning, implementation, continuous improvement, and measurement of outcomes. "Introduction" (Erwin Flaxman), examines types of evaluation, the evaluation process, and program evaluation in school and community-based settings and implications for policy. The three essays include "Challenges to Evaluating School and Community-Based Violence Prevention Programs: A Framework for Action" (Daniel J. Flannery and Megan Seaman); "The Assessment of Conflict Resolution Programs" (Morton Deutsch); and "Evaluating School and Community-Based Violence Prevention Resource Guides: What To Look for, What to Do" (Daniel J. Flannery and Megan Seaman). (Papers contain references.) (SM)

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Evaluating School Violence Programs

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INTRODUCTION

Schools are not as dangerous and vulnerable as we believe, despite indicents like Columbine, which are almost apocalyptic in intent and outcome. To dispel myths about an epidemic of school violence, without ignoring that it is pervasive, we need to think about school violence more evenly. In the past few years, as we have learned more about the incidence and causes of school violence, we have developed more sophisticated approaches for preventing it and ameliorating its effect on its victims and bystanders, and perpetrators, alike. But not enough is known yet about the value and impact of these efforts.

Schools have come far in finding the right programs to deal with a variety of problems in preventing school violence. Daniel Flannery, one of the authors of two papers in this collection, nicely describes them in another paper:

> Some focus on working with individual children identified by teachers or peers as aggressive or at risk for school failure. Others combine a focus on individual and family risk by integrating school-based programs and work with parents and families, peers, or community members. Still other programs integrate an individual risk focus with attempts to change the school environment. Most strive to increase student social competence and to reduce aggressive behavior. (Flannery, 1999, p. 1)

All of these programs recognize that developing students in families, schools, neighborhoods, and in a society that enhances opportunity and resilience and reduces risk, is the best prevention and antidote to school violence. This is why the best anti-violence approach will engage and integrate many home and community life influences.

As educators we feel the imperative to reduce school violence, and have the ingenuity to conceive, design, and implement a variety of programs, some research-based, some intuitively sensible; however, we do not have enough empirical evidence that these interventions are successful. There are many reasons why this has happened. Most educators are more interested in practice than understanding

it, and are not prepared to study it, even if they are interested. But equally important, there are scarce resources for evaluations that are meaningful to program staff and that can add to our knowledge about successful school anti-violence practices. We have not been able to train staff either to conduct an internal evaluation, to use an outside evaluator, or to create a cost effective and efficient collaboration between them. In compiling the essays in this collection we have tried to show how these problems can be overcome in practice, without minimizing or whitewashing the extent or depth of the constraints.

We have arrived at the moment that we can no longer support programs, including school violence prevention programs, without some reliable outcome data, at least data demonstrating their promise. But the burden for evaluation should not be the program official's alone. It has to be shared by funders, who can help local programs evaluate their efforts, for their own improvement. These evaluations can also help the funders themselves wisely invest in future efforts. Beyond knowing whether their money has been well-spent, funders need to use the knowledge gained from program evaluations to determine whether their grants have brought about the social changes that they advocate.

Funders ask their grantees to use accepted social science methods to determine which of their objectives they have achieved (if any), why, and how. But although evaluation is a condition of many grant awards, it has been loosely monitored and only intermittently honored. Most funders have not been able to structure a grant award to increase the likelihood that the program will be evaluated, just as most grantees do not work in a culture that supports program evaluation. If funders seriously want grantees to assess how their performance has met their objectives or plans, they must actively help grantees to create this culture. Funders can require that grantees demonstrate greater organizational capacity, particularly the leadership and staff skills necessary for logical planning, monitoring, and evaluation. Most small-scale local programs, however, will not have this capacity, and will not be able to create it, without the help of the funder, especially community-based organizations. This means that an award should provide additional funds, to be set aside for the leadership development and staff training that will lead to better program evaluation.

But the incentive of financial support is not enough. Funders can make available information about the growing number of non-technical guides to the basic principles of an internal program evaluation, which can help staff in program definition, planning, implementation, continuous improvement, as well as in measuring program outcomes. The essays in this collection review many of these resources, and themselves provide significant guidance for evaluating school violence programs.

Under ideal circumstances, funders could also help their grantees to get outside technical assistance in carrying out a program evaluation, although project staff will still need to recognize its value. Unfortunately, the cost of the necessary level of technical assistance would be prohibitive and drain limited local operating funds, if used. There are, however, a number of regional technical assistance networks which have devised strategies for providing continuing but broad-based assistance. Funders fully committed to program improvement and better evaluation should consider supporting organizations which identify and broker technical assistance services expressly tailored to the evaluation needs of local projects.

Clearly, we can find many efforts to prevent school violence, and they are enthusiastically supported locally and nationally. Now we have to find out whether they are successful..

—Erwin Flaxman
Director, Institute for Urban and Minority Education and
the ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education

REFERENCE

Hannery, D.J. (1999). *Improving school violence prevention programs through meaningful evaluation.* Choices Briefs No. 2. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, Institute for Urban and Minority Education, Choices in Preventing School Violence Project.

Challenges to Evaluating School and Community-Based Violence Prevention Programs: A Framework For Action

Daniel J. Flannery and Megan Seaman

Introduction

Schools and communities around the country are implementing violence and substance abuse prevention programs with increasing frequency. This is partly due to demands from policy makers for comprehensive school safety plans. It is also partly due to the perception that violence at school is on the rise, and to the recognition that schools provide a logical context for implementing comprehensive violence prevention programs. Coupled with the increasing frequency of program implementation, funders and policy makers have called for more rigorous evaluations of effectiveness and outcomes. There is more demand for evidence-based practice, and for outcomes which show positive behavior change. While the fields of violence prevention and program evaluation have grown significantly in the past few years, we are still at the beginning stages of acquiring rigorous, long-term outcome data on best practice strategies for violence prevention.

Further, there exist few resources for the non-research oriented professional seeking to learn about and conduct basic evaluation tasks related to program implementation. Not all community-based providers or school staffs have access to a university-affiliated researcher with expertise in evaluating violence prevention programs in applied settings. Not all researchers have experience in conducting applied research in schools and communities. And few policy makers understand the complexities of doing research in the arena of violence prevention in a way that allows research and data to be applied to everyday practice and policy.

The purpose of this essay is twofold: (1) to provide guidance on developing an infrastructure for the evaluation of violence prevention

programs, and (2) to discuss some of the challenges and barriers to evaluating school and community-based violence prevention programs. We begin with a brief overview of the different types of evaluations that can be conducted and how each might inform programmatic issues, intervention, or outcomes. We then review the benefits of conducting a program evaluation and the basic steps in doing so. The next section presents some challenges to evaluating school and community-based violence prevention initiatives and, where appropriate, some guidance on how to manage these challenges. The information presented here builds upon earlier work in this area (Flannery, 1997; 1998). This overview is not meant to be comprehensive or exhaustive; rather, this is a summary of the elements of an effective infrastructure for evaluation and of the practical challenges of program implementation and evaluation likely to be faced.

Types of Evaluation

In any intervention program, four basic questions are asked:

(1) What kind of intervention is needed and who should be targeted?

(2) What are the program's desired results and what will be changed?

(3) What components of the program make it successful? and

(4) Is the program cost effective?

Recently, funders at the local and Federal levels also have been asking another question: What is the evidence that the intervention can be sustained locally over the long term?

Answering these questions requires paying attention to the development of the program's infrastructure for evaluation, program planning, and long-term implementation.

Four basic types of evaluation can be integrated into the existing structure of most schools or community-based programs to address these questions. Programs may not have the need to conduct each type of evaluation, but they should be aware of their options and the role that each type can play to help them answer the most basic questions about their intervention. The four types of eval-

uation strategies most commonly utilized are needs assessment, outcome evaluation, process or monitoring evaluation, and cost-benefit analysis.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

A needs assessment (or formative evaluation) helps an organization determine what it needs to do regarding violence reduction and prevention. Some organizations may skip a needs assessment, either due to a perceived lack of resources or because they believe that solely a commitment to do something to reduce violence is sufficient to move forward. This could be a costly mistake in the long run. A needs assessment can provide an accurate description of the problem(s) that the community faces. Information needed to describe the problem can come from many sources, including available archival information, from local or national surveys of students, school staff, community providers, or parents; or from focus groups or interviews with community members. Examples of community-based archival data that may be helpful in a needs assessment include: police records; hospital records on emergency room referrals or injury rates; school nurse records on fighting and related injuries; school records on attendance, discipline infractions, or weapons violations; outpatient mental health records on incidence of mental health problems; and Federal or foundation-based surveys that include local data. A needs assessment can also do the following (Thornton, Craft, Dahlberg, Lynch, & Baer, 2000):

(1) Identify the intended participants for an intervention. Is the target population youth, families, or both? Is there a need for universal preventive intervention where all youth in a school or community are exposed to a program, or for more targeted services to at-risk youth? Will the program focus on young people in elementary school or on all youth through high school?

(2) Identify possible settings in which to reach intended participants. Many different settings exist for interventions to prevent violence. Where the intervention occurs will impact evaluation strategies, the potential availability of information on program components, and the practicality of gathering information from program

participants. A school-based intervention usually has several information streams built into the school system, and is itself a setting where information can be gathered from many children and staff in a relatively short period of time. If an intervention includes response to a crisis in a family's home, there may be greater restrictions on the information-gathering process.

*(3) **Analyze the role of violence in the community.*** Development of a customized, and therefore more effective, long-term violence prevention strategy requires consideration of the following: (a) the nature and prevalence of violence perpetration and victimization in the school or community; (b) the precursors to youth violence which affect the children in the school or community; and (c) the impact of violence on child adjustment, mental health, and learning..

*(4) **Set goals and objectives.*** The first question an evaluator should ask of a program administrator is "What is the goal of the program?" or "What do you want to see changed as a result of doing this intervention?" If the goals of an intervention are not clear, then the evaluation plan will not be as clear or effective. At the program level, goals should be consistent with the behaviors and settings targeted for intervention. Goals should be broad statements about what the program seeks to achieve, accompanied by specific objectives that reflect how the program is going to reach the goals. A common pitfall occurs when an agency sets extremely lofty goals with unobtainable or unrealistic objectives. Aspiring to service 90 percent of an identified high-risk target population may be admirable but not achievable. Similarly, reducing violence rates by 50 percent in a school may be overly optimistic, at least in the short term. Ambitious goals may help a program receive initial funding, but the program may be setting itself up for failure simply because its goals and objectives are not realistic to the task at hand. Unreachable goals also set up the evaluation for failure as the conclusion may well be that initial goals were not achieved. Such an evaluation would be inaccurate if the setting and circumstances of the intervention or population made those goals unattainable from the beginning

*(5) **Select an appropriate program or intervention strategy*** (or multiple programs) to address desired goals and objectives and meet the

needs of participants. This may be one of the most daunting tasks that an organization newly embarking on a violence prevention initiative may face. There are now a multitude of guides on school and community-based violence prevention. Most guides provide descriptive information about the types of programs available, but few provide a framework for how to evaluate the program effectively or how to evaluate one program relative to another when determining which would best fit particular local needs. Choice of intervention strategy (e.g., school or community-based) will have major implications for how that program can or cannot be evaluated.

Addressing each of these needs assessment tasks efficiently and comprehensively will contribute to the utility and efficiency of the evaluation strategy, and will increase the potential for meaningful results. It is important to keep in mind that an intervention plan that will work in a larger community or in an urban setting may not be as effective or necessary in a smaller or rural community. Interventions that are imposed on a community by an outside entity are less likely to succeed than locally-generated or -supported initiatives.

Outcome Evaluation

The second type of evaluation, an outcome evaluation, answers the question "what changed because of the intervention?" Did the program reduce child aggressive behavior or violence? Did the program result in improved social skills or an increase in school attendance? The outcome questions addressed in the evaluation should flow directly from the program goals and objectives. The types of outcomes sought for an intervention will also impact the types of evaluation methods used to assess them. Some outcomes can be measured using available archival data, others by surveys already administered to participants in community-based agencies or to students at school. Still other outcomes may be more readily assessed by direct observations of behavior, or gleaned from focus group discussions of a participant's experience in a program.

When selecting behavioral outcomes, it is important to remember that common factors underlie a constellation of problem behaviors, including violence and substance use. For example, the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health has consistently demonstrated the role of attachment to school and school achievement as protec-

tive factors which reduce the likelihood that an adolescent will engage in delinquent or violent behavior and substance use (Resnick et al., 1997). If these outcomes are identified outcomes of a violence prevention initiative, they must be clearly explicated, and the rationale for how they will be realized based on exposure to the intervention, clearly developed. An outcome may be a desirable behavior, but if it is not clearly linked to the intervention, and is not defined in a way that it is measurable, then program goals will not be met and the evaluation of outcomes will be unrelated to program content. Clearly defining program goals, desired outcomes, and their connection will go a long way toward establishing relevant and effective outcome assessments of the program's success as well as helping to identify possible limitations.

Process Evaluation

Process evaluation (also referred to as program monitoring) addresses the question "what makes the program work and why?" One of the most difficult aspects of an evaluation is determination of which specific components of an intervention are related to which specific outcomes. And this becomes increasingly difficult as interventions become more comprehensive, multi-level, and complex. Children are exposed to a myriad of influences in their schools and communities that may be related to behavior outcomes, and isolating the effects of a young person's exposure to a specific intervention may be next to impossible. This is where a more qualitative approach to evaluating program effects may be helpful. Sometimes program participants can say which of their experiences were impactful. These impressions are sometimes more difficult to glean from a quantitative survey.

Another often overlooked component to process evaluation is an assessment of the elements of a program or intervention. Is the program being implemented according to the original plan? Does the intensity of the program change over time? Does staff implement the program differently over time? All of these factors related to the process of program implementation have major implications for program effectiveness and outcomes. Fidelity of program implementation is critical to intervention success. Even the best, most well-intended program will not have its intended effect if it is not implemented with fidelity and by well-trained and supported staff.

Cost-Benefit Analysis

A cost-benefit evaluation answers the question "is the program cost effective?" It might include an assessment of how much the program costs to implement (per individual or per school), or how much the program saves in other related costs (e.g., diversion to incarceration or keeping a child in a regular vs. an alternative school setting). Costs related to implementing a program can include direct program outlays for materials and training. They may also include the costs of staff time for participating in training, implementing the intervention (this can be problematic if it takes away from academic instruction time, given the emphasis in some districts on achievement test scores), and collecting evaluative or program data from participants or records; and of ancillary services included in the program initiative (e.g., outpatient therapy for families identified through a school-based initiative).

The Evaluation Process

Benefits of an Evaluation

Why should a school or community-based program conduct any kind of evaluation, especially if it is implementing one of the identified "best practices" previously evaluated by some other group? One must keep in mind that there are lots of types of evaluations that can be conducted, at lots of different levels. Evaluation of a previously tested best practice program may be more limited in scope (and thus in cost) than evaluation of a newly created or more complex intervention (e.g., a combination of many programs). Some of the benefits of conducting evaluation include the following:

Understanding of the population served. Every school and community is different. The participants in any program will vary by ethnicity, age, family structure, neighborhood, socioeconomic status (SES), and their set of previous experiences. The impact of the intervention on the target population will be different from the effects found in other schools or communities.

Understanding of the services provided. What is developed on paper is seldom a complete reflection of what happens in reality. Even

the best designed program will work a little differently in one community or school than it did in another location. Understanding how a program works for the target population in the setting identified for intervention, and assessing its impact on policy in the local community, are important pieces of information that should continue to guide decisions about implementation, evaluation, and funding.

Improvement of the services. Ideally, evaluative data should be provided back to the program on a regular basis so that information gleaned from the research can be used to modify or improve program services. If an assessment of program participants shows that they are dissatisfied with a component of the service, then modifications to that component should be considered. At a minimum, the reasons for the dissatisfaction should be explored. Changes to the intervention, based on data, should be considered before the end of the intervention, especially if the program is set up to last several years. No one can afford to wait several years for data to show whether a program is effective.

Data to report to collaborators. Violence prevention initiatives are increasingly collaborative, multi-systemic, and complex. For example, the Safe Schools/Healthy Students initiative funded by the U.S. Departments of Education, Justice, and Health and Human Services requires collaboration among schools, mental health care providers, law enforcement, community organizations, and evaluation researchers. Effectiveness of an intervention requires active participation by all collaborators because one partner's efforts may directly impact on outcomes achievable by another partner.

For example, if an intervention to reduce childhood trauma symptoms experienced because of exposure to violence depends on police response and referral to the program, it would be important to be able to provide evidence of the effectiveness of the intervention to police officers who initially respond to violent incidents. Officers are much more likely to continue to make referrals to the program if they know that it benefits the children and families, or if referred families make fewer calls to the police for assistance after participating in the intervention. Having police agree about the benefits of a mental health intervention would also help the program obtain funding for services.

Data to support funding of the program. In an era of increasing competition for more limited resources, programs have the burden of providing objective data demonstrating effectiveness. Funders are inundated with requests for support. Programs that have quality outcome data are in a better position to obtain those limited resources than programs without any evidence of effectiveness.

Enhanced scientific knowledge. Despite the growth in the number of school and community-based violence prevention programs, the field still lacks the scientific knowledge base that accrues with well-designed evaluation studies of program effectiveness. Longitudinal studies are particularly sparse (Drug Strategies, 1998).

Requirements for an Evaluation

One of the most critical elements of doing effective evaluation is the establishment of an adequate system for information gathering. This includes developing procedures and mechanisms for gathering data, having adequate access to information, and managing that information so that it is usable for the program evaluation. Information gleaned should be available for sharing across systems (e.g., schools with juvenile courts and with children and family services) to enhance the efficiency of delivery of services and to enable outcomes to be tracked across settings. Many children, especially targeted, at-risk youth, are involved in multiple systems. Their exposure to a school or community-based intervention may affect outcomes in any one of those other systems.

It is important not to underestimate the need for adequate computing power (and expertise). Some communities have well-established infrastructures for information gathering and management in their schools, health departments, police departments, and community organizations. Other communities still collect much information "by hand" via paper and pencil. If vital records are only available through a manual search of individual files, the cost and complexity of using that data in an evaluation could be significantly increased. Some communities have records stored in computer systems, but the access to those systems is cumbersome and time consuming. For example, access to some juvenile court records requires a person to use a dedicated computer terminal or data line

and to type in individual names to determine adjudication status. Thus, if the effectiveness of a diversion program that serves several thousand youth annually is being evaluated, gathering the information (and reentering it into the program's own data base system for analysis) can be time consuming and costly.

Decisions about intervention strategies and effects should be based on local information and practice. It is always useful to understand the information already in hand before proceeding with new data gathering or intervention planning. Existing information from the targeted population, school, or community can serve as baseline data. Baseline data provide information from which any measurable change that results from an intervention can be assessed.

One of the most challenging tasks in implementing and evaluating a violence prevention program is the development of the infrastructure for sustainability of program implementation. Few funding streams are available that will provide resources for more than a few years, even for the most promising, well-evaluated programs. The reality, however, is that few large-scale interventions are maintained in any community without significant external support and resources. The challenge is to work from the start to garner political and community support for the sustainability of the program's operation. The more comprehensive the effort, with multiple providers and multiple systems benefiting from the service, the more likely the program will be institutionalized and supported over the long term. Good evaluation data on implementation, sustainability (process) and outcomes can contribute significantly to this effort.

Steps in Conducting an Evaluation

There are several basic steps or components to conducting any evaluation. Within the context of agreeing that evaluative efforts can be more or less comprehensive (often depending on need or resources), the following highlight the basic steps:

(1) Be clear and specific about the program goals and objectives. This first step will drive the development of the rest of the evaluation design and implementation. One potentially useful evaluative tool at this stage is a logic model of the program components.

Short-term, intermediate, and long-term goals can be identified. A logic model also helps link program components to specific outcomes, part of the process evaluation. The *Kellogg Foundation Evaluation Handbook* (1998) has a helpful section on the development of logic models that is easily understood by the non-researcher. Logic models also help to convey program elements and expectations in a simple but comprehensive manner to potential funders and policy makers. It is important to keep in mind the answer to the question "What do you want to find out or show when you're done?"

It may also be helpful to distinguish, from the beginning, what the program *needs* to change versus what it *wants* to change. Need may be determined by the initial needs assessment or requirements of the funder or political will. *Want* may be more idealistic or long term, but it is important to consider these questions up front, as need often translates later into want, especially when the evaluator is explaining to the funder or politician the reality of what was accomplished versus what someone *wants* to see accomplished.

*(2) **Decide how to determine whether the intervention works.*** When will it be apparent that the program has demonstrated something positive or worthwhile? There are statistical measures of effects. For example, comparing a group that received program services to a group that did not, an evaluator could compare rates of problem behaviors before and after program implementation. If the rate of the group that received the intervention is lower than that of the comparison group by a statistically significant margin, it might be concluded that the treatment had the desired effect.

Is there any other evidence for effectiveness? The answer partly depends on the original goals and how outcomes were defined. Is the focus on behavior change, cost effectiveness, the program's generalizability to other groups or communities, or all of the above? The answer also depends on who is asking. A legislator may want evidence of overall declines in crime rates for the community, while a school administrator may want specific data on reductions in individual student discipline incidents, while a foundation officer may want to see evidence of effective collaboration, with efforts by one partner impacting the need for resources by another partner to provide services.

*(3) **Determine the scope of the evaluation.*** The scope of the evaluation will depend on several factors. First, the nature and extent of the intervention will determine whether the evaluation is comprehensive or more limited. Second, resources will matter. It is typical for 10 to 15 percent of a project's total budget to be allocated for evaluation. The amount will be closer to 10 percent if the intervention has been previously evaluated in other settings, if evaluation tools have already been developed or identified from existing measures, and if procedures for information gathering are in place. Assuming these conditions, and that information is readily accessible from several sources and systems (e.g., archival school data are computerized and available), then costs related to evaluation can be minimized. If, however, none of these conditions exist, and if the intervention is multi-level and complex, spanning multiple systems, then evaluation costs will be higher, perhaps even exceeding 15 percent of the total project costs. If evaluation team members are expected to gather information directly via survey or observation, or if additional staff is required to conduct archival record review, these labor intensive activities will require more resources to complete.

Within the scope of a large intervention project, it is possible to prioritize evaluation tasks and to limit the focus to a few major evaluative questions. The project may decide that the outcome questions are a priority, and that cost-benefit analysis may be undertaken at another time. If a "best practice" intervention is being implemented, whose components and effective mechanisms are clearly identifiable, then there may be less emphasis on conducting a thorough process evaluation. In the end, it is best to conduct a few evaluative tasks well than to try to do a comprehensive evaluation of every type for every component of the program, and do them poorly. When the project is completed, administrators want to have something reliable and valid to say, even if they cannot answer every question asked at the beginning of the program.

Whatever the size of the evaluative effort, it is important to think along the lines of developing a multi-trait, multi-method matrix. This means that from an evaluation perspective, the program will benefit most from a focus on gathering different types of information from as many different types of sources as possible. For example, while the intervention may be focused on violence prevention, it may be very helpful to measure aggressive and delinquent

behavior (multiple traits) in addition to violent behavior, because actual violence may be perpetrated by a very small portion of the target sample. Similarly, it may be worthwhile to consider measuring social skills or social competence, and more positive behaviors that may increase due to the program, rather than just focusing on reductions in negative behavior as indicators of program success. Regarding multiple methods, where possible an evaluation design should include gathering information via a variety of available techniques, including opinion or experience surveys, collection of archival data or review of records, interviews, behavior observations, and focus groups. The method utilized will depend on pragmatic issues of time, cost, staffing requirements to gather the information, and general feasibility. It may not be feasible to conduct focus groups or extensive interviews of participants, but it may be feasible to survey a sample of program participants before and after their participation in the intervention.

Information should also be gathered from a variety of sources, whenever possible: from the target population (e.g., children), those who provide the intervention (e.g., teachers), those who may benefit from or participate indirectly in a program (e.g., principals, police officers), and others associated with the intervention or population (e.g., parents, community mental health care providers).

When conducting any type of program evaluation, it is important to appropriately define or operationalize the constructs or behaviors targeted for change. There should be strong consideration of this process, especially if information is going to be gathered at more than one point in time. Once collection of information begins (i.e., at baseline), the research design and the applicability and utility of the findings will be compromised if the assessment measures change.

The simplest route to take is to use instruments that have been previously used and validated on a similar group of program participants. Developmentally appropriate questions are particularly important to pay attention to. Questions about violence designed for high school students will probably not be appropriate for elementary school children. Questions should also reliably assess the targeted behaviors. If, for example, the program focus is on aggressive behaviors, surveys or instruments that are valid and reliable measures of aggression should be selected rather than something else. A related question to consider is whether multiple informants

would be rating the targeted behavior consistently over time and in the same way for different participants. There are many validated and reliable surveys and scales already in existence. Some may have been used previously to evaluate the program. Some may be reviewed in other publications (e.g., Thornton et al., 2000). The consistent mantra is that an evaluation should start with resources in hand, then consult existing projects and literature before development of new assessment tools is begun. Modifying an existing survey (for content, length, developmental appropriateness) is almost certainly going to be easier and more cost effective than developing a new survey.

*(4) **Decide on the research design.*** What should be the strategy for collecting information on program effectiveness? There are three basic components to any evaluation effort that will make the results more readily interpretable and valid. The first is collection of outcome data before the intervention is implemented. This provides baseline information from which change can be assessed. The second is assessment, whenever possible, of a comparison group of individuals not exposed to the intervention. A comparison group should be as similar as possible to the individuals who participate in the program. Similarities in terms of the factors that can affect behavior change and outcome are particularly desirable to achieve. For example, if the population targeted for the intervention is families in the neighborhood that live below the poverty level, then the comparison group would ideally be comprised of other similar families who may be eligible for the program but for some reason (which is documented) do not participate. If the comparison group is similar on key factors (neighborhood, SES, child gender, family size, parent education level, ethnicity), then differences between the groups seen after the intervention are less likely to be attributable to those factors and more likely to be due to participation in the program.

The third basic component, and the hallmark of any rigorous evaluation study, is the random assignment of individuals to the intervention program group or a nonintervention comparison or control group. This standard is the most difficult to achieve, both practically and ethically, and is rarely achievable in schools and communities. Let's return to the earlier example of a community-based intervention where police officers refer children and families

exposed to violence to a crisis intervention team for assessment and further services. How practical or ethical would it be for a police officer or crisis worker to show up at a home immediately after a traumatic incident has occurred and offer: "We know that you may want these services and we believe that you may benefit from them, but would you be willing to be randomly chosen either to get services or be in a no-service comparison group?" This would be neither feasible nor realistic. How many high-risk, difficult to engage families would agree to those conditions? How many officers or crisis workers would agree to propose those conditions to families in those circumstances? Not many. It is always important to balance the research design and desire for rigorous evaluation with the pragmatics of service provision and ethical, fair treatment of program participants.

There are some programs that, on the surface, may not appear to lend themselves to a randomized design or to the identification of a control or comparison group. The family-based intervention Families and Schools Together provides services to about 15 families at a time (per 8-week cycle) at each site, typically a school (McDonald & Frey, 1999). Sometimes, more than 15 families express an interest in participating. Depending on how families are identified, and the number of 8-week cycles that the program can afford to implement, it may be possible to assign families originally interested in the program randomly to an immediate intervention or a future program cycle. This design permits some comparison of intervention vs. nonintervention control groups, but also eventually provides the service to all eligible families that want them. The necessary baseline or pretreatment data could be collected from all families before they are randomly assigned to a program cycle, assuring that there is comparable information from all eligible families. If the families all come from the same school and neighborhood, then they will be similar on these important factors, and differences observed would more likely be attributable to participation in the program.

*(5) **Implement the evaluation.*** Remember the point made earlier: in implementing an evaluation, it is better to do a few things well than to do many things poorly. When the evaluation is completed, it is crucial to have something to say with confidence, based on reliable and valid information gathered from multiple sources using

multiple methods. The first task before implementation is to revisit the original research questions to make sure that all of the work done in preparation for the evaluation has not strayed from assessment of the original program goals and objectives. If the methods and instruments to specific questions or program components cannot be connected, it should be determined whether essential information was collected. This "extraneous" information should not be completely discounted, however. Many times we have conducted a program evaluation and found that information gathered because we thought it might be interesting or helpful (not necessarily explicitly tied to our original research questions) turned out to be essential in interpreting our main findings or to lead to additional important questions about the program or participants that we never anticipated before we started. So, it is useful to be creative, flexible, and as comprehensive as possible without overwhelming the program staff, the evaluation staff, or the resources available for the overall project.

Once everyone is comfortable with the design of the evaluation and with the instruments and methods for gathering information, the next step is to begin collecting the data. The first category of information, to be collected before services are provided, is baseline data on program participants (and individuals in the comparison group). Optimally, the evaluator has been "at the table" from the beginning so that questions about the evaluation design, instrumentation, and method of information gathering can be answered by program staff before anything unexpected occurs. For example, an evaluation design may call for gathering archival data, with the assumption that a community-based agency will have basic demographic information available on participants in computer files. The evaluator may assume these data are accessible and in a form amenable to a merge with other survey data collected, and can be analyzed using a standard statistical analysis program. Of course, this is often not the case, and the evaluator may find that while the data are in a computer file, the information desired may be difficult to obtain, protected by agency confidentiality rules, or be housed in a data management system that is not easy to access for detailed analysis. The sooner these challenges are identified, the more likely a reasonable solution (involving resources, staffing, or evaluation priority) can be found.

Sometimes the evaluation is occurring while the program continues to be developed and implemented. This tends to be truer for larger, multi-component community-based projects. It is becoming rarer for intervention programs and, therefore, for evaluations to be focused on one program that operates independently of other programs or influences. These types of projects (e.g., Safe Schools/Healthy Student sites) often combine programs across multiple systems, each with its own policies, requirements, data management challenges, and program procedures. Trying to merge program elements, information gathering protocols, and procedures can be a daunting task. We find that we often propose gathering information that disparate systems all deem important and valuable, but collect differently. Thus, there exists a need to change the way individual systems gather or manage that information so that it is usable by both the systems and evaluation teams. This sometimes requires new information gathering protocols, new consent procedures for program participants, the development of new forms or software, and development of new mechanisms that allow information access and a data format that is usable to individuals outside of the original agency.

*(6) **Analyze the data.*** The first task at this stage is to describe what was done, and for whom, from a program perspective. This might mean documenting the number, characteristics, and type of services provided to each participant in the intervention and comparison groups. The reality is that not all participants will remain in the intervention group, nor will all participants receive all available services. There may be important differences between participants who received more intervention and those who received less, or between participants who agreed to receive services and did so and those who also agreed but never took part in more than introductory or intake sessions. These intervention group participants may be the program dropouts or non-completers. What participant or project characteristics distinguished between the dropouts and completers? What descriptive information might identify potential barriers to program participation? The bottom line is that if it is not known who participated in the program, and who did not, then some core outcome, process, and cost-benefit evaluation questions cannot be answered.

The second major component of the data analysis phase is consideration of the audience for the data analysis. Are the data being reported back to project staff? Then the analysis of information may focus on program components, who is receiving services, how many have completed the program. Or, the focus may be on the completeness of the information gathered, or on the utility and ease of use of the forms developed for data gathering or consent procedures. Just placing a question on a form does not guarantee that information will be gathered consistently or accurately from referral sources, project staff, or program participants. This "process" or monitoring issue will directly impact on the amount and accuracy of information available to address questions of outcome. Consistency, accuracy, and completeness of information being gathered should be examined early on in a project or during a pilot phase so adjustments in protocol, procedure, forms, or processing of information can me made. The longer a program waits to do this, the more problems will arise later when it is discovered that the information anticipated for examination of project goals and objectives has not been collected.

If the audience for the evaluation is the program funders, then the evaluator may end up analyzing data at a level where the information is more interesting, practicable, and useful for them. How many people received services? What is the evidence that the service was beneficial, both to individuals and to the community? Positive outcomes were realized compared to what or to whom? Funders may be interested in the percentage of change over the course of the intervention. They may want to know if a change observed is significant, but they may be less interested in the statistical procedures used than in the way that information is presented. Funders may also want to hear about cost issues, as well as long-term sustainability, although we have found it helpful to place our findings in the broader context of scientific findings of other local and national initiatives. Local funders and policy makers like to see how the project they support compares to others around the country. Policy makers like to see that they are making a difference, but also how local policies reflect national trends.

The third task for data analysis is review of the program's original goals, outcome questions, and program monitoring issues. Are the data examined in a way that allows all or most of the original

questions to be answered? Sometimes there will be data to answer part of a question but not all of it. That is all right. Sometimes data analysis leads to unanticipated findings or to questions. We find this "data mining" in the analysis phase to be extremely critical and helpful to the overall evaluative process.

Finally, it is important to be patient. The more data that are gathered, and the more complex the intervention, the more involved the data analysis phase will be. If information is gathered from multiple sources more than once, then longitudinal questions will come to bear at some point. These would include questions like "Did program participants change over time?" and "Did degree or amount of exposure to the intervention make a difference in outcomes?" The latter question may be extremely important to address in the absence of a nonintervention control or comparison group.

*(7) **Disseminate the findings.*** Again, remember the audience for the evaluation. Schools and community-based organizations are not scientific journals. Lots of tables with lots of numbers are usually not as useful as graphs and figures. Pictures can speak a thousand words.

Second, briefer is usually better. Few individuals have the time, inclination, or need to read long, detailed, scientifically complex reports. Longer reports should be generated by the evaluator as comprehensive, historical records of the project, data, analysis, and findings. However, the original dissemination of project findings should probably be presented in executive summary format, with the main outcomes summarized in narrative form (with supporting graphs or figures) rather than in a long, complex document. The fuller report can contain descriptions of the instruments, their reliability and validity, and the specifics of the data analytic methods and procedures. These do not need to be reviewed in the summary of project goals and findings to members of the community.

Third, disseminating findings sooner is better than later. The evaluator should have the staffing resources to spend adequate time cleaning, merging, analyzing, and writing up the data gathered. This "end point" is just as important as the need to be clear at the beginning about project goals and objectives. Why spend several years conducting a program and collecting data, but not commit the resources for understanding what was found? Further, the data will largely drive decisions about continuation of the program. Programs

are not in a position to wait months or years for evidence of effectiveness, especially if funding depends on demonstrating promising or positive results. At a minimum, it will take an evaluator several months from the project end date to analyze data from program participants. This best case scenario also depends on the evaluator doing data cleaning and merging on a continuous basis throughout the project. Data analysis and preparation of a final report will also require the commitment of several research staff, with more staff time necessary for bigger, more complex evaluation programs.

Program Evaluation in School and Community-Based Settings and Implications for Policy

Availability of Resources

An evaluation can only be as involved and comprehensive as the resources available to support its implementation. This does not merely mean the money allocated for evaluation activities, but also staff made available to support the evaluation. Usually evaluation is one of the first components to be reduced or cut when program funding is reduced, but it is the first place that funders and policy makers look when considering further support for the program. Experienced evaluators can assist a program with utilizing as much data as possible to maximize the resources available for data analysis and dissemination. Some data can be gathered by program staff rather than independently by evaluation team members. Some methods are more costly than others. Conducting observations is usually more costly than analyzing archival data.

Agency resources and capacity to implement a program and evaluation plan also come into play. They can include administrative support, community awareness and support, attention to staff training, commitment to the fidelity of program implementation, and the long-term sustainability of the program. Few interventions show effects after one year of implementation. Recent research also suggests, for example, that schools without adequate support and resources to initiate a program, including well trained staff, may do more harm than good. Doing something is not always better than doing nothing.

CONCERNS ABOUT THE EVALUATOR

What if a university-based research partner cannot be secured? While it is better to be physically present at a meeting, and to have a firsthand understanding of local concerns, the way organizations are structured, and the politics of working together, technology has significantly enhanced the ability for researchers to act as consultants from afar. There are three possible evaluation models for a program: (1) use an external, independent evaluator; (2) hire an internal evaluator, or use existing program staff to conduct the evaluation; or (3) combine the use of an internal staff person conducting the evaluation with an external consultant who can provide technical expertise on aspects like design, assessment instruments, and data analysis. Even if a program is responsible for conducting its own program evaluation, there now exists a fuller literature on school- and community-based evaluation programs and a few "how to" manuals on the basic elements of evaluation design (Kellogg Foundation, 1998).

A different set of challenges arises if a research partner is available but has not done this type of evaluation before. Thus, there are several questions to ask the evaluator in advance of the assessment. These include: "What kind of evaluation experience do you have, i.e., what kinds of programs have you evaluated before?" "What methods have you used to gather evaluation data?" "How do you see the role of the evaluator on the project team?" "How well do you know our community or issues that may affect our target population?" "How will you handle data if findings are not what we expected?" and "What experience do you have in providing feedback to policy makers and funders?" It is also reasonable to ask a potential evaluator if the program administrator can review copies of previous evaluation reports. Budget and other program costs (e.g., indirect costs) should be discussed up front. The cost of conducting an evaluation can vary widely depending on the proposed design, staffing plan, and analysis plan. Finally, other program staff should meet with an evaluator. Conflicts and disagreements will sometimes occur. If the program staff and the evaluator do not get along well, the project will suffer greatly.

Program administrators may also have pragmatic considerations related to conducting an evaluation. Will new forms or poli-

cies need to be developed to accommodate the evaluation component? Will new consent procedures and forms be required? How will the research issues affect the program's ability to deliver services? Will program participants be willing to participate in an evaluation study? Can the program provide adequate access to its participants and appropriate data? Are there new legal issues related to evaluation staff access to data (e.g., legally sensitive information from police or courts) or regarding contact with program participants, especially minor youth?

Challenges for the Evaluator

One challenge for the evaluator can be the task of evaluating a vaguely defined intervention. If the program components are not obvious, it would be very difficult to evaluate their impact. Conversely, an evaluator may also be faced with evaluating a very complex program model; such models are increasingly common as best practice interventions. However, in a multi-system, multi-level program, it is extremely hard to determine which program component or combination of components causes a desired (or undesirable) effect. The use of the logic model, which matches program elements with specific evaluative questions, strategies, and methods, can be very helpful when evaluating complex service delivery models.

As we stated earlier, randomization of program participants to intervention and nonintervention groups is the hallmark of rigorous, experimental research. Most evaluators are interested in the scientific merit of the data they are gathering. If a program is not designed to accommodate randomization, what are the options? We've talked about constructing a nonintervention comparison group, and of examining the program participants' different levels of exposure to the program or intervention. However, from an evaluator's perspective, it may be necessary to commit significant resources to identifying, recruiting, and gathering information from subjects who are not benefiting from program participation. They are less accessible, less willing to provide information (especially without compensation), and less likely to participate over the long term. Much information already gathered can be utilized as valuable evaluative data. This includes information on services provided, units of treatment, number of contacts, participant demographics,

or tracking of program elements. Community-based organizations often gather data to meet requirements for service billing (e.g., Medicaid, mental health departments) and this information can be used as part of the evaluation.

What should be the balance between quantitative versus qualitative methods of gathering information? Ideally, decisions should be based on the method's relevance to answering the specific evaluation questions. Further, it is necessary to consider accessibility to information and method (e.g., surveys vs. focus groups) and the resources available to the activity. Large-scale surveys can be expensive to conduct (e.g., gathering survey data from children, teachers, parents, and program staff) but may provide more information than a few targeted focus groups.

How can a program administrator be confident that the data are accurate? It is important to make sure that the archival or administrative data used are accurate and reliable. They can be checked by doing some systematic independent data gathering. For example, if school data on discipline referrals to a principal are being used, a member of the research staff can randomly check with school staff or visit a school to determine whether the data are being gathered consistently and reliably. Alternatively, evaluation staff could develop a form for systematic information gathering across school sites for program evaluation purposes. Another option would be to commit resources to data gathering that are more directly under the evaluator's control, rather than depending on others for information gathering. For example, the evaluation staff could spend dedicated time doing observations of students in a classroom rather than depend on teachers for completion of behavior surveys. Again, issues of cost, staff resources, time, and usefulness of information gathered need to be taken into account.

Evaluators must always be aware of the implications of data gathering on human subject protocols and procedures, especially if they are gathering sensitive information from children on violent behavior, exposure to violence, delinquent behavior, or substance use.

Many community-based programs and interventions in schools are impacted by significant subject mobility and attrition. In this respect, there are few true experimental designs in evaluation research. Most designs automatically become quasi-experimental in nature as soon as program participants drop out or the intervention

group is nonequivalent to the comparison or control group. Creative, flexible evaluators should take mobility and attrition into account in their research design and data analysis plan.

Neither program staff nor evaluators can control all the other factors or events occurring in the community, both positive and negative, which may affect program participants. Schools, for example, often have multiple intervention programs in place, some for substance abuse, others for gang resistance, and still others for general life skills development. At times the best the evaluator can do is document these events or programs. If program participant and control groups are similar, then we often assume that exposure to other events or programs in the community will be similar as well. Of course, this may not be the case in more unusual circumstances. When a multiple homicide occurs at a local school during the time a violence prevention program is in place, individual student exposure to that event, knowledge of the event, or relationship to victims may significantly impact students' emotional status, behavior, etc. in unusual ways that would have to be taken into account as part of the program and evaluation.

Evaluators also need to consider that normal developmental artifacts may impact behavior outcomes in ways independent of program effects. Children become less prosocial as they mature, so declines in helpfulness may be normal developmentally and unrelated to program impact. Similarly, children in grades K-2 are often much more aggressive than children in grades 3-5. Having an understanding of these normal developmental phenomena will help the program and evaluator place in context and interpret observed outcomes.

Sometimes, a program results in no effect, or even negative effects. Sometimes program participants do less well than similar groups of individuals who are not exposed to the intervention. Doing applied, community-based evaluation work is difficult and stressful, for both the program staff and the evaluation team. Sometimes researchers are trying to conduct relatively rigorous research in systems that are not set up to support such activity. The systems can be disorganized and strained themselves, with the pressure of working with high-need, high-risk children or families. Adding the strain of doing evaluation to this work can be overwhelming to staff. Goals of service delivery often compete with the goals of an evaluation team. Evaluation staff need ongoing support

and constant education about the process of gathering data in applied settings.

It is also essential to be sensitive to cultural issues in your community. This could include a family's willingness to allow evaluators into their home and to ask sensitive questions. Sensitivity could also include paying attention to the construction of survey instruments and specific questions.

Challenges for the Program

It is important to be flexible in the program staff's work with the evaluator. The challenges inherent in merging a program's goals with evaluative goals are difficult enough to tackle. If either the evaluator or program administrator is rigid in stance, then little of value will be accomplished. Of course, from the program perspective, the fidelity and quality of the implementation of the program cannot be compromised just to meet the goals of information gathering for research or evaluative purposes.

It is also important to be willing to collect information from program participants in a systematic way so that data are reliable and meaningful. This may mean dedicating staff time for training by the evaluation staff in the use of instruments, procedures, and protocols for information gathering, and for understanding why they are collecting certain information and its role in service provision and program support.

A program may have to modify human subject protocols to include collection of evaluation specific or research data or to make data available to the evaluator that might not normally be accessible, to contact participants directly at a later time for potential follow-up (if the design calls for follow-up or focus groups). In some instances, procedures will need to be approved by an Institutional Review Board (IRB) for protection of human subjects. Most universities have IRB boards that would review and approve the protocol for data collection, management, and storage. The board will request changes if they are needed to bring the project into compliance with Federal regulations (e.g., obtaining active parental consent to gather data from minor children). It may be helpful if a program administrator appears before the board with the evaluator to explain agency procedures and protocols.

An evaluator should not overwhelm the program services. An inexperienced evaluator may suggest assessment of everything and anything to try to ensure that nothing is missed. If all contact time is spent gathering data, there may be no time left to provide services. Also, if participants are overwhelmed initially with data gathering, they may be less likely to agree to any follow-up.

A program should recognize in its original design and in allocation of staff and other resources for the evaluation the time and effort that is needed to gather information, manage it, analyze it, and disseminate it effectively. Whenever possible, the evaluation staff's need to access important, relevant information should be accommodated. Sometimes this may mean modifying procedures or forms, or granting access to traditionally confidential information. In such cases, the project will need to address changes in human subject protocols for data access and sharing. Much information already gathered can be utilized as valuable evaluative data. This includes information on services provided, units of treatment, number of contacts, participant demographics, and tracking of program elements. Community-based organizations often gather data to meet requirements for service billing (e.g., Medicaid, mental health departments) and, depending on confidentialiy issues, this information may be used as part of the evaluation.

While the program probably will not get compensated for data gathering (not a billable service), collecting the information may be necessary to obtain ongoing support for the program and its staff.

Political Considerations

Evaluations of school and community-based programs are not conducted in a political vacuum. There are always program administrators, policy makers, or funders who are waiting for outcome findings either to champion the program's cause or to shift funding from the program to other initiatives. It would be foolish to ignore these issues in the conduct of the evaluation. From an evaluator's perspective, it is important to understand that the program administrator will not be able to answer all questions comprehensively, and that the evaluation will probably lead to new questions that cannot be answered in the short term. From the program perspective, it is important to understand that a commitment to a well-designed

evaluation will limit criticism of the findings, both positive and negative, from individuals not directly associated with the program. From both the evaluator and program perspectives, it is important to try to consider the implications for policy from the outcomes, but not to be driven by those potential implications at all times.

Sometimes an evaluation determines that a program does not have the intended, desired, or positive effects that were postulated. What should a program administrator do if negative effects are found? There is a great deal of pressure to find positive outcomes. This goes back to the original goals and objectives of the program and the evaluative questions asked. Not all findings will be exactly what was expected, and not all findings will be positive. The key is to learn from the program and have the data to drive future decisions about implementation or resources.

One challenge is to deal with the pressure to make a system look effective. If a school- or community-based system or program agrees to data collection and evaluation because they are needed to support its work, what happens if the evaluator finds something that the administrator thinks will make the program look bad? What if the evaluator finds that a disproportionate number of young people report using illicit substances or bringing weapons to school? What if program participants report dissatisfaction with the services they receive? It is important for the evaluator to come to agreement at the beginning with program staff about the propriety of information gathered, dissemination plans, and the use of data gathered for scientific publication. If a program is Federally or foundation funded, then the data gathered may be available by law for public domain and review. By agreeing to receive the funds, the school or community program has agreed to these conditions and must abide by them. Potential negative findings can be minimized if the evaluator and program people work together from the beginning.

Summary

Conducting effective, efficient, and scientifically valid evaluations of community-based programs is difficult work, especially in light of the increasing complexity of multi-system, multi-level, comprehensive interventions. The successful program will have program and evaluation staff who are willing to be flexible, creative, and per-

sistent. All will make mistakes, and sometimes the best thought-out decision will turn out to be the wrong one. Program and evaluation teams will not always agree on the best strategy, and sometimes goals and objectives will be in conflict. That is okay. The point is to learn from the mistakes and apply what is learned to the program. Being overly rigid will severely limit the program's chances for success.

It is key to remember that all elements of an evaluation impact on all others. Doing the hard work early and well will significantly impact the information collected in the end, the ability to answer evaluation questions, and the utility of the program's work for funders and policy makers. More programs are expected to develop the infrastructure for long-term sustainability. Conducting a rigorous, reliable, and valid evaluation of the program is an essential component of its long-term sustainability and impact.

Evaluating program effects is not just about assessing individual behavior change. There are many types of evaluation, and there is no gold standard for determining the scientific merit of the effort. In some cases, an evaluation will focus on systems-level impact, or on broader family or community outcomes, or on policy. These are all legitimate foci for an evaluation effort. Specific goals and outcomes should be determined by the program goals, objectives, and needs. The main question is no longer merely "Does it work?" Rather, the more appropriate question has become "Under what conditions and for whom does it work, and why?"

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The Assessment of Conflict Resolution Programs

Morton Deutsch

In this essay, I present a framework for assessing conflict resolution programs and indicate how education practitioners can do research which will enable them to reflect productively on their practice. There are many kinds of research, all of which have merit. They have different purposes and often require varying types of skills. There is a tendency among both researchers and practitioners to derogate research that does not satisfy their specific needs or does not require their particular expertise. This is a profound mistake, however, since both professional researchers and practitioners have much to contribute to the development of knowledge about conflict resolution programs.

Types of Research

Several types of research are relevant to the development and assessment of conflict resolution programs: basic research, developmental research, field research, consumer research, action research, and research for self reflection upon an educator's practice. Although the insights and cooperation of the practitioner are valuable in all forms of research, the skills of the professional researcher are particularly needed in basic, developmental, field, and consumer research.

Basic Research

Many unanswered questions regarding knowledge and practice in the field of conflict resolution still need to be answered. Among them are the following:

- What are the reliable, valid, and reasonably precise ways of measuring the knowledge, attitudes, and skills involved in constructive conflict resolution?

- What are the basic dimensions along which cultures vary in their response to, and management of, conflict?

- What determines when a conflict is ripe for intervention or mediation?

- What are the important similarities and differences in conflict processes at the interpersonal, intergroup, and international levels?

- What are the intervening psychological processes that lead to enduring and generalized change in managing conflict, and what are the psychological and social consequences of such change?

- What differences exist among people with different types of personalities in their styles of conflict management?

- What type of value system is implicit in the current practice of conflict resolution?

These are only a few of the important questions that must be addressed if we are to have the kind of knowledge needed to make conflict constructive—whether it be in school, the family, industry, or community. These sorts of questions require systematic, extended research which is directed at developing theory and the knowledge that would be useful in developing, as well as assessing, conflict resolution programs.

Developmental Research

Developmental research is concerned with helping to shape effective educational and training programs. Such research identifies the best ways of helping people acquire the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary for constructive conflict resolution. It answers such questions as: How should knowledge be taught (for example, the most effective type of curriculum)? For how long? The best strategies are apt to vary as a function of the age, educational level, cultural group, and personality of the children and adults involved.

There is a bidirectional link between development and basic research. To assess and compare the changes resulting from various educational and training programs, it is necessary to know what changes these programs were seeking to induce and also to develop valid and reliable measuring instruments and procedures for measuring the changes.

There has been very little of the kind of research suggested here. Some evaluation research has indicated that conflict resolution training (CRT) is viewed as worthwhile by those using it; some has demonstrated that such training has positive effects on self-esteem and on reducing destructive forms of conflict (Deutsch, 1993; Lam, 1989). We now need to go beyond demonstrating that CRT can be useful; we have to start studying what types of training are most effective and most efficient.

Field Research

Field research is needed to identify the features of political systems, cultures, and organizations that facilitate or hinder effective CRT. For example, can CRT have desirable effects with inner-city high school students living and studying under adverse circumstances? What kind of culture is most favorable to CRT training, and what kind makes it unfeasible or ineffective? Which levels in an organizational hierarchy must be knowledgeable and supportive of CRT for it to be effective? In schools, what type of CRT model should be employed: extracurricular activity, a specific course in conflict resolution (CR), infusion into all school courses, use of constructive controversy, or all of the above? Is cooperative learning a necessary precondition or a complement to CRT? Who should teach CR: a specialist in CRT, a teacher, a student, or a parent? What criteria should be employed in selecting CR trainers?

Most of these questions have to be asked and answered in terms of the specific characteristics of the individual school, taking into account the resources, organization, personnel, student body, and social setting. Little if any research has been done on questions of this type because it is difficult and expensive to do such direct research. Experience surveys as a feasible alternative approach to such issues are discussed below.

Consumer Research

It would be valuable to have periodic surveys of where CRT is taking place, who is being trained, what kind of qualifications the trainers have, and so on. Also, it would be good to know how CRT training is evaluated by its recipients, immediately after training and then one year later. In addition to studying individuals who have had CRT, it would be useful to assess what the market is for CRT among those who have not had it.

Most of the research on CRT in schools and other organizations has been essentially study of "consumer satisfaction." The research has usually involved studying the effects of CRT in a particular classroom, workshop, or school. Results are quite consistent in indicating a considerable degree of approval among those exposed to CRT, whether in the role of administrator, teacher, student, or parent (Lim & Deutsch, 1997).

Action Research

Action research is a term originally employed by Kurt Lewin for research linked to social action. To be successful, it requires collaboration between the action personnel—the trainers, school staff, and practitioners—and the research personnel. What the action personnel do can be guided by feedback from the research concerning the effectiveness of their action. To study the process involved in successfully producing a change (or failing to do so) in a well-controlled, systematic manner, the researcher depends on the cooperation of the action personnel. Most research on CRT in the schools—no matter how it is otherwise labeled—is a form of action research.

There are many potential sources of difficulty in this practitioner-researcher collaboration. It is time consuming and hence often burdensome and expensive to both the partners. Also, friction may occur because of their disparate goals and standards: one is concerned with improving existing services, the other with advancing knowledge of a given phenomenon. The practitioner may well become impatient with the researcher's attempt to have well-controlled independent variables (e.g., administration of the CRT program in essentially the same way in every classroom), and the intrusiveness involved in extensive measuring of the effects of the CRT

program on the student's knowledge, attitudes, skills, and behavior. The researcher may become exasperated with the practitioner's improvisation and reluctance to sacrifice time from other activities to achieve the research objectives. In addition, there is often much evaluation apprehension on both sides: the practitioners are concerned that, wittingly or unwittingly, they will be evaluated by the research findings; the researchers fear that their peers will view their research as not being sufficiently well controlled to have any merit.

Research for Self-Reflection

Although it is impossible for self-reflecting practitioners to assess whether a particular conflict resolution program is generally effective (e.g., effective when used by other teachers, or with different students, or in other school cultures), they can find out what effects the CRT program that they are using has on their own students. To do so, practitioners will need to ask such questions as the following:

- What are my objectives in using this program? Do I want it to help in establishing a peaceful, orderly classroom? To help students manage their conflicts more constructively—in school? At home? In everyday life? To improve their grades?

- How will I know if my objectives are achieved? What kinds of information will I need to collect and how will I collect it? Is there a decrease in negatives (such as fights, bullying, victimization, verbal abuse, hurt feelings, antagonisms, discrimination, and disorder) and an increase in positives (such as a willingness to face problems openly; maintaining respect for the other during conflict; working cooperatively to resolve conflicts; listening to and communicating with the other; confidence in ability to deal with problems; or better relations with peers, teachers, and family members; as well as increased harmony and order in the classroom)?

- How will I use my observations, self-reports by students (obtained through interviews, questionnaires, or diaries), and reports by others about the student (e.g., other students, other

teachers, parents, staff) to provide me with the information I need to assess what changes, if any, have resulted from CRT?

- If the CRT program appears to have achieved its objectives, is it because there has been a real change in the students (e.g., they have decreased their negatives and increased their positives through exposure to CRT) or because the students were good conflict resolvers prior to training? If there has been a desirable change, is it due to CRT or to some other factor, such as the increased maturity (age) of the student, or to the introduction of some other change in the curriculum, school, or neighborhood?

- If CRT does not achieve my objectives, how can I determine the reasons for the failure? Are other teachers having similar CRT results or are some having better results? If poor results are common, are they due to identifiable inadequacies in the CRT program; to inadequate training or support for implementing the program successfully; or to a countering influence in the school, families, or neighborhood? If poor results are not common, are there important differences between the way I and my more successful colleagues implement the CRT program, or are the differences mainly in the nature of the student groups being taught?

Self-reflecting teachers and CRT trainers will be aware of the natural tendency to think that what they do has desirable effects, and will be appropriately skeptical and aware that they need specific evidence that whatever positive effects have occurred are, in fact, due to their efforts.

Research Strategies

Many factors make it very difficult to do research on the questions outlined in the previous sections, particularly the kind of idealized research that most researchers would prefer to do. For example, it is rarely possible to assign students (or teachers, or administrators) randomly to be trained (or not trained) by randomly assigned expert trainers employing randomly assigned training pro-

cedures. Even if this were possible in a particular school district, there would be the possibility that the uniqueness of the district had a significant impact on the effectiveness of training; no single district can be considered an adequate sample of all or other school districts. Employment of an adequate sample (which is necessary for appropriate statistical analysis) is very costly and probably neither financially nor administratively feasible.

Given this reality, what kind of research can be done that is worth doing? Here I outline several mutually supportive research strategies of potential value.

Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Research

Experimental research involves small-scale studies that can be conducted in research laboratories, experimental classrooms, or experimental workshops. It is most suitable for questions related to basic or developmental research, questions specific to what is to be investigated. Thus, experimental research would be appropriate for testing the hypothesis that role reversal does not facilitate constructive conflict resolution when the conflict is about values (such as euthanasia) but is constructive when interests are in conflict. Similarly, it would be appropriate for examining the relative effectiveness of two different methods of training in such conflict resolution skills as perspective taking and reframing.

This kind of research is most productive if the hypothesis or question being investigated is well-grounded in theory or in a systematic set of ideas rather than *ad hoc*. If well-grounded, such research has implications for the set of ideas within which it is grounded and thus has more general implications than does testing an *ad hoc* hypothesis. It is necessary to be aware, however, that in this type (as well as in all other types) of hypothesis-driven research, a hypothesis may not be supported—even if it is valid—because implementation of the causal variables (such as the training methods), measurement of their effects, or the research design may be faulty. Generally, it is easier to obtain nonsignificant results than to find support for a hypothesis. Thus, practitioners have good reason to be concerned about the possibility that such research may make their efforts appear insignificant even though their work is having important positive effects.

The logic involved in true experiments assumes that complete randomization has occurred for all other variables except the causal variables being studied. But human beings have life histories, personalities, values, and attitudes prior to their participation in a conflict resolution workshop or experiment. What they bring to CRT from their prior experience may not only influence the effectiveness of the training being studied but also be reflected directly in the measurement of its effects. Thus, an authoritarian, antidemocratic, alienated member of the Aryan Nation Militia Group may not only be unresponsive to CRT, but also independently of this, may score poorly on such measures of the effectiveness of CRT as ethnocentrism, alienation, authoritarianism, and control of violence because of his or her initial attitudes. Such people are also less likely to participate in CRT and be responsive to it than democratic, nonviolent, and nonalienated people.

With appropriate "before" measures and correlational statistics, it is possible to control for much (but far from all) of the influences of initial differences in attitudes on the "after" measures. In other words, a quasi-experiment that has some resemblance to a true experiment can be created despite the prior histories of the people who are being studied.

Causal Modeling

Correlations, by themselves, do not readily permit causal inference. If a negative correlation between amount of exposure to CRT and authoritarianism is found, its cause may be the fact that those who are authoritarian are less apt to expose themselves to CRT, as I have suggested, or that those who have been exposed to CRT become less authoritarian, or the causal arrow may point in both directions. It is impossible to tell from a simple correlation. However, methods of statistical analysis developed during the past several decades (and still being refined) enable appraisal with considerable precision of how well a *pattern* of correlations within a set of data fits an *a priori* causal model. Although causal modeling and experimental research are mutually supportive combinations, causal modeling can be employed even if an approximation to an experimental design cannot be achieved. This is likely to be the case in most field studies.

Consider, for example, a study we completed several years ago on the effects of training in cooperative learning and conflict resolution on students in an alternative high school (Deutsch, 1993; Zhang, 1994). Prior theoretical analysis (Deutsch, 1949; 1973; Johnson & Johnson, 1989), as well as much experimental and quasi-experimental research (see Johnson & Johnson, 1989, for a comprehensive review), suggested what effects such a training could have and also suggested the causal process that might lead to these effects. Limited resources made it impossible to do the sort of extensive study of many schools required for an experimental or quasi-experimental study, or to employ the statistical analysis appropriate to an experiment. So we created a causal model that, in essence, assumed training in cooperative learning and/or conflict resolution would improve the social skills of a student. This, in turn, would produce an improved social environment for the student (as reflected in greater social support as well as less victimization from others), which would lead to higher self-esteem and more sense of personal control over one's fate. The increased sense of control would enhance academic achievement. It was also assumed that improvement in the student's social environment and self-esteem would lead to an increased positive sense of well being as well as decreased anxiety and depression. The causal model indicated what we had to measure. Prudence suggested that we also measure many other factors that potentially might affect the variables on which the causal model focused.

The results of the study were consistent with our causal model. Even though the study was quite limited in scope—having been conducted in only one alternative high school—the results have some general significance. They are consistent with prior theory and also with prior research conducted in very different and much more favorable social contexts. The set of ideas underlying the research appears to be applicable to students in the difficult, harsh environment of an inner-city school as well as students in well-supported, upper-middle class elementary and high schools.

Survey Research

This form of research is widely used in market research; pre-election polling; opinion research; research on the occurrence of

crime; collection of economic data on unemployment, inflation, sales of houses; and so on. A well-developed methodology exists concerning sampling, questionnaire construction, interviewing, and statistical analysis. Unfortunately, little survey research has taken place in the field of CRT. Some of the questions that could be answered by survey research have been discussed above, in the Consumer Research section.

Experience Surveys

Experience surveys involve intensive in-depth interviews with a sample of people, individually or in small focus groups, who are considered to be experts in their field. Often the purpose of such surveys is to obtain insight into the important questions needing answers through the experts' identification of important gaps in knowledge or through opposing views among the experts on a particular topic. In addition, interviewing experts prior to embarking on a research study generally improves the researcher's practical knowledge of the context within which the research is conducted and applied, thus helping the researcher avoid the minefields and blunders caused by naivete.

Most important, experts have a fund of knowledge, based on their deep immersion in the field that may suggest useful, practical answers to questions that would be difficult or unfeasible to answer through other forms of research. Many of the questions mentioned earlier in the Field Research section are of this nature. Of course, the researcher's confidence in the answers of the experts is eventually affected by how much agreement or disagreement is manifested.

There are several steps involved in an experience survey. The first is to identify the type of expert respondent desired for the survey. For example, with respect to CRT in schools, it might be useful to survey practitioners (the trainers of trainees), teachers who have been trained, students, or administrators of schools in which CRT has been provided. The second step is to contact several experts of the chosen type and have them nominate other experts, who in turn nominate other experts. After several rounds of such nominations, a group of nominees usually emerges as being widely viewed as experts. The third step is to develop an interview schedule. This typically entails formulating a preliminary schedule that is tried out and modified as

a result of interviews with a half dozen or so of the experts individually or in groups. The revised schedule is formulated so as to ask the experts all of the questions whose answers are sought, while leaving them the opportunity to raise issues and answer the questions in a way that was not anticipated by the researcher.

What to Measure

The objective of most CRT programs is to affect the knowledge, attitudes and emotions, skills, and behaviors of the participants so that when they are involved in a conflict they are more likely to initiate and develop a constructive process of conflict resolution. Thus, assessment of a CRT program may measure the effects of the program on students' knowledge of conflict processes; on their orientation, attitudes, and emotions toward a conflict; on the component skills involved in constructive conflict resolution; and on behavior in diverse conflict situations. Below, some of the variables that might be measured are briefly outlined.

Knowledge

This assessment covers the students' acquisition of knowledge in the following areas: (1) the typical steps involved in both constructive conflict resolution and mediation processes and (2) basic concepts, such as reframing, cooperation, competition, active listening, responsive cooperation, mutual problem solving, the distinction between needs and positions, taking the perspective of the other and role reversal, ethnocentrism and cultural differences, misperceptions, and "hot buttons" in self and other.

Orientation, Attitudes, and Emotions

This assessment measures whether the students have acquired the orientation, attitudes, and emotional responses to conflict which facilitate constructive rather that destructive conflict resolution. It helps determine whether the students have developed a cooperative (win-win) rather that a competitive (win-lose) orientation to conflict, with positive (hopeful, interesting, creative) rather than negative (fearful, anxious, avoidant, antagonistic) expectations and feel-

ings about conflict resolution processes and outcomes. Assessment might also cover the effects of the CRT program on social attitudes such as alienation, trust, suspicion, ethnocentrism, authoritarianism, and power-orientation.

Skills

The ultimate test of the effectiveness of a CRT program is whether the participants have acquired the skills that are needed for constructive conflict resolution and whether they use them in the conflicts they experience in their daily lives. The following skills are the focus of many CRT programs.

- Ability to "break the ice," reduce tension, find common ground between oneself and the other, and establish a friendly working relationship.

- Ability to reframe the conflict so that it is viewed as a mutual problem to be resolved cooperatively.

- Ability to communicate effectively and responsively with the other, and to listen actively to the other, which involves understanding the meaning and emotions involved in what the other is communicating and checking the correctness of each participant's understanding of the other's communication.

- Ability to engage in perspective taking and role reversal, which involve empathic understanding of the other's situation and social cultural context as well as the other's position and underlying needs.

- Ability to differentiate between "position" and "needs" and to identify the underlying needs in oneself and the other.

- Ability to problem solve, including being able to diagnose the nature of the conflict, creatively generate potential solutions to it, and evaluate the alternative solutions in terms of their feasibility, durability, desirability, and fairness.

- Ability to support, encourage, and enhance the other.

- Ability to control personal impulses (e.g., resist being overly angry, over-conciliatory, and ethnocentric; overreacting when one's "hot buttons" are pushed; and being defensive).

- Ability to respond constructively to the other's emotional outburst, attacks, ethnocentrism, "hot buttons," and defensiveness.

- Ability to deal with "dirty tricks," "deception," and the other's unwillingness to cooperate.

Behavior in Different Situations

Individuals are sometimes more able to employ their knowledge, attitudes, and skills to manage their conflicts constructively in some types of situations than in others, with some types of people and not others, and about some types of issues and not others. It is useful to know what types of situations, people, and issues are problematic for a student. It is impossible here to set forth a comprehensive classification of types of situations, people, and issues, but some distinctions that are relevant to the ease of resolving a conflict are identified here:

- It seems likely that the knowledge acquired in CRT can readily be transferred to situations which are characterized by strong norms of cooperation and also values such as reciprocity in fairness, human equality, shared community, recognition of personal fallibility, and nonviolence (see Deutsch & Coleman, 2000, Chapter 2). It can be expected that if a situation is characterized by radically different norms and values a transfer would be difficult. Thus, if the school culture is authoritarian and competitive, it may be difficult to make the transfer from the more cooperative, egalitarian culture in a CRT classroom. Similarly, the likelihood of the transfer from CRT in the classroom to conflicts in the family, work, or community settings will be affected by the norms and values in these different settings.

- If the other approaches conflict with the norms and values underlying constructive conflict resolution, transfer is likely—providing that an individual's relations with the other does not lead to abandonment of these norms and values. There has been no systematic research in this area, but it seems likely that transfer is more apt to take place in conflict with peers than with superiors or subordinates, and with others whose personalities are compatible with the individual's own rather that incompatible.

- Issues that threaten personal or important group identities, esteem, security, or survival are difficult to resolve constructively, as are issues that have a long history of contentious, unresolved dispute. In addition, conflicts over basic values, relative power, relative status, or possession of limited resources vital to security, esteem, identity, or power are difficult to resolve constructively unless the parties involved in the conflict are highly skilled and are strongly committed to the norms and values underlying constructive conflict resolution.

How to Measure

There are a number of different forms of measurement: observation, interviews, questionnaires, diaries, and records.

- ***Observation of actual behaviors in real conflict situations*** is probably the most persuasive form of data collection, but also the most difficult and costly. However, teachers who have continuing contact with their students may be in a good position to observe changes in behaviors in their classrooms. Because observation of real conflicts is difficult, observation of "simulated conflicts" is commonly used as a substitute. Here, the teacher assigns students to take a given role in a situation that simulates a real conflict (e.g., a conflict between two friends, a parent and child, a student and teacher) and observes their behavior.

- ***Interviews and questionnaires*** involve obtaining reports from the students about their own knowledge, attitudes, skills, and

behavior in conflict situations. An alternative is obtaining such reports from others in a position to observe the student's behavior (e.g., fellow students, neighbors, friends, parents, teachers, supervisors, and subordinates). Interviews with individuals or focus groups are a much more flexible way of obtaining useful information than questionnaires, but also much more costly and time consuming.

- ***Review of diaries*** in which the student records daily experiences with conflict can be of considerable value, especially if students are given a framework or set of questions to use as a guide.

- ***Review of data found in records*** of various sorts can also be useful to determine whether there is a decrease in student violence, delinquency, vandalism, disciplinary cases, absenteeism or truancy, health complaints, depression, and neurotic symptoms; or an improvement in school grades, voluntary actions to help the class or school, cooperative activities among teachers, and so forth.

Resources

Several types of publications may be useful for those who want to be self-reflecting practitioners: those dealing with learning through reflection, those focusing on research methods, and those describing research that has been conducted and research methods that have been utilized in evaluating conflict resolution training. Some valuable references in each of these three areas are presented below.

Learning Through Reflection

Marsick and Sarquet (2000) have written an excellent chapter on this topic and their list of references contains additional useful reading, including Marsick and Watkins (1999), Mezirow (1991), and Schon (1987).

Research Methods

The classic textbook on research methods by Judd, Smith, and Kidder (1991) contains excellent chapters on all aspects of research, including interviewing, questionnaire construction, observation methods, as well as other forms of data collection. The monograph by Robinson, Shaver, and Wrightsman (1991) contains descriptions and examples of a great number of widely employed measures of personality and social attitudes, some of which may be influenced by CRT.

Research Studies

The authors of the various chapters in *The Handbook of Conflict Resolution* (Deutsch & Coleman, 2000) make reference to a wide variety of studies that are relevant to CRT, and that contain specific measures for assessing the effects of CRT. A section of Chapter 27 also provides a summary of research findings on CRT. Bodine and Crawford (1998), in their own chapter, "Research Findings on What Works," in their collection also present a relevant summary. See Lam (1989) for a review of the impact of conflict resolution in schools, and Elliott, Hamburg, and Williams (1998) for a review of research on programs to prevent school violence.

In addition, there are a number of recent, well-designed studies which have employed measurement instruments that are appropriate for students at different ages. For preschoolers, Sandy and Boardman (in press) have described various ingenious measuring instruments that they have employed in The Peaceful Kids Conflict Resolution Program, as well as the measures they used with parents and the day care staff. (Contact Dr. S.V. Sandy at the International Center for Cooperation and Conflict Resolution, Box 53, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, NY 10027.)

Johnson and Johnson (2000) have described a series of studies with students ranging from kindergarten through ninth grade in their *Teaching Students to Be Peacemakers: Results of Twelve Years of Research.* Their measures are briefly described in this paper. (Contact Professor David W. Johnson at the University of Minnesota, 60 Peik Hall, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 55455.)

Aber, Brown, and Heinrich (1999) have conducted systematic research, using very interesting measures, with children in elemen-

tary grades. (Contact Professor John L. Aber at the National Center For Children in Poverty, Joseph L. Mailman School of Public Health of Columbia University, New York, NY, 10032.)

Jones (Jones, 1997; Jones & Kmitta, 2000) has done extensive research, using a variety of well-developed measures, on students in elementary, middle, and high schools. (Contact Professor Tricia S. Jones at the Department of Communication Sciences, Temple University, Philadelphia, PA, 19122.)

Coleman and his work group (Coleman & Lim, in press) have constructed systematic questionnaires for evaluating CRT for use with adults who were trained and other instruments for use with people who know the trainees well, and can report on changes in the behavior of the trainees. (Contact Professor Peter Coleman at the International Center for Cooperation and Conflict Resolution, address above.)

Summary and Conclusions

In this paper, I have presented a framework for thinking about the assessment of conflict resolution programs. I have also briefly discussed different types of research and research strategies, as well as ways of measuring the kinds of effects that might be achieved from such programs. Although self-reflective practitioners will often have neither the resources nor the advanced training in research methods to do much of the research outlined in this paper, personal self-reflection can become deepened and more systematic by careful consideration of the issues presented here.

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Evaluating School and Community-Based Violence Prevention Resource Guides: What to Look for, What to Do

Daniel J. Flannery and Megan Seaman

Introduction

Despite recent downturns in national rates of juvenile violence, many children and school staff continue to report that they do not feel very safe at school. In fact, while the overall rate of violence at school has decreased in recent years, the number of multiple homicide incidents at school has increased (Kaufman et al., 1998). These rare incidents have received a great deal of attention in the media, usually immediate and intense. This has contributed to the perception of children and adults that schools are not as safe as they used to be. In many communities, legislators and school administrators, law enforcement and mental health professionals have begun to examine their school safety policies and initiatives to prevent or reduce violence (Decker, 2000).

This renewed focus on schools comes at a time when the area of violence prevention in general and school violence in particular has changed tremendously. The knowledge base for what is effective science-based practice has grown significantly, as has the sheer number of intervention strategies now available to schools and community-based practitioners. Along with the implementation of more programming to intensify violence prevention efforts, there is increased emphasis on evaluating the impact of those programs on student behavior, school climate, and policies related to violence prevention.

A good assortment of resource guides has been developed recently that focus specifically on violence prevention programs. This paper provides information about the availability of these guides and reviews in more detail a subset of them with respect to their utility for school or community-based professionals who are

developing a violence prevention strategy.

Our review is not meant to be exhaustive or comprehensive. Rather, the selection of guides considered in more detail is illustrative of the different kinds of resources available. While our decisions are largely based on the areas or content covered, we also wanted to review a variety of different types of manuals. For example, some guides focus on school-based programs specifically, whereas others cover community-based programs. Some resource guides are geared toward mental health professionals or school counselors. Some focus on targeted youth programs, others on universal prevention or public health programs. Because of our primary concern with school-based violence prevention strategies, we do not include a review of guides specific to other areas of prevention such as substance abuse or family violence.

This essay is organized into several sections. First, we lay out our methodology for identifying the 33 resource guides reviewed. Next we discuss the two tables that provide information on the guides, which are presented at the end of the paper. Table 1 describes each guide's primary subject area (including coverage of evaluation as a topic) and target audience, and provides information on acquiring the guide. Table 2 summarizes each guide's coverage of particular content. In some instances we were able to indicate whether a topic was covered in depth or just mentioned as a necessary component (e.g., evaluation, staff training). We then present a more detailed review of seven guides selected on the basis of the number of content areas covered and the general focus of the guide. Finally, we offer some summative comments about the strengths and weaknesses of resource guides for school-based violence prevention programs.

Methodology

Our initial strategy in searching the literature was very broad. With a general focus on youth violence prevention and a more specific interest in school-based violence prevention strategies, we conducted a systematic search of the Internet. Guides that covered school or community-based violence prevention strategies, whether they were universal or targeted to at-risk youth, were included. We also included resource guides that discussed risk and protective factors related to youth violence and guides that reviewed safe school

practice and policies. We searched governmental agencies, research institutes, private foundations, and academic institutions. We did not strictly confine our search to resource guides and manuals, because we also came across several books, research briefs, and special editions of academic journals that focused specifically on school-based violence prevention. Some of these resources are included in our tables, and others are referenced as appropriate in our narrative.

We were also interested in reviewing resource guides for the non-researcher or for the practitioner who may not have ready access to an academic institution. We found guides that targeted a variety of audiences, from school staff and administrators to law enforcement personnel to community-based organizations. Our review therefore contains guides that were developed specifically for each of these targeted groups of professionals.

Finally, we restricted our search to more recent guides, and decided to include those produced since 1995. In fact, we excluded very few resources because they were developed earlier; most of the guides we located were written in the past three years. This fact illustrates the growing attention to the issue of violence prevention and the accumulating knowledge base for identifying, implementing, and evaluating best practices.

Our first task was to provide an overview of the focus and availability of each of the guides reviewed (Table 1). Our second task was to provide a more substantive review of the content of each of the resource guides contained in Table 1. The content areas selected for inclusion reflect the topics most typically covered by the resource guides reviewed. Specifically, we considered whether the guide provided current data on the prevalence or incidence of school violence to provide context for the kinds of programs reviewed. "Programs" and "Curriculum" refer to whether the guide systematically reviewed specific school- or community-based violence prevention programs or specific curricula instead of offering general information about strategies or issues. We also note in Table 2 whether a resource guide discussed the importance of a school's forming partnerships with other community-based agencies in their violence prevention planning and the steps to take in building those partnerships. Several of the substantive categories in Table 2 are self-explanatory, as in whether the guide discussed risk or protective fac-

tors, whether it covered specific programs or services to targeted, high-risk youth (versus primary prevention programs), and whether it included general safe school planning as part of a comprehensive violence prevention initiative.

We looked for coverage of several content areas specifically because of their inconsistent coverage across manuals. For example, we tried to identify whether resource guides covered program evaluation as a separate topic (indicated with two check marks on Table 2) or just indicated in a more cursory way that evaluation is a necessary component of a program's effort. Similarly, we noted whether programs were presented in a developmentally appropriate context, whether they contained any discussion of the role of staff training, whether they covered identification of and support for at-risk youth, and whether they contained some discussion of the challenges or barriers to implementing an effective violence prevention strategy.

Based on our review of substantive areas covered, we then selected seven resource guides to consider in further detail (shaded in the tables). They were chosen because they covered the greatest number of topics and were examples of different types of guides, each with a different focus or target audience. Some guides covered most of the areas considered important, but did not go into much detail on the specific methods of undertaking the tasks related to the specific area. Some guides presented detailed information on the important areas, but focused on only one strategy of violence prevention. In review of all of the included resources, it was apparent that not one single guide or manual had all the answers to implementation of a school- or community-based violence prevention program and/or curriculum.

Criteria for Review of Resource Guides

For our more in-depth review of selected resource guides, we chose categories that we thought were most relevant to the non-research oriented school or to the community-based professional interested in implementing violence prevention programs in their particular setting. Since guides varied fairly significantly on substantive areas of coverage, we felt it important to have a sense of what a guide did well and what it was not intended to do. Our

review in this essay of these substantive areas was meant to complement and in some cases expand on the content areas covered in Table 2.

The first consideration was the intended or ***target audience*** of a resource guide. While it could be argued that effective violence prevention should be multi-disciplinary and information provided for one group would be helpful to other professionals, the reality is that most guides are written with a specific group of professionals, types of programs, or contexts in mind. Thus, a school administrator interested in broad-based strategies for school-based violence prevention may not find a guide developed specifically for counselors with emotionally disturbed youth the most helpful.

The second criterion for review was the ***breadth or scope of information*** covered by the resource guide. Each guide tended to cover one or a few areas in more detail than others. Few guides gave significant breadth of coverage to every potential topic (e.g., from policy to staff training and implementation guidelines to evaluation work). Brevity of coverage may be a strength if the guide were meant solely as a resource or reference to other material, but in some instances a guide may be limited by the brevity of coverage of an important topic.

The third area considered was the ***organization and readability*** of the resource guide. This was a rather subjective assessment, but an important consideration for the professional not familiar with the area of violence prevention. Fourth, we considered whether recommendations for best practice or for developing effective strategies were ***theory- or information-based.*** Too many programs are available that have not been evaluated or developed based on what we know.

Fifth, we considered whether the guide responded to the need for a ***multi-risk, multi-system, comprehensive (but flexible) strategy,*** since recent research on effective violence prevention strategies has consistently pointed to it as important. Singular, time- and risk-limited approaches are generally not effective strategies in the arena of violence prevention. We also considered whether a resource guide discussed the ***role and importance of staff training.*** Preventive interventions that are not implemented by well-trained, highly qualified staff are not effective. Fidelity of program implementation over time is essential for effectiveness and for long-term sustainability. A well-trained, dedicated staff is a significant resource that provides the capacity for accurate and effective implementation.

Seventh, we examined whether a guide discussed ***the role of evaluation*** in program planning and implementation for best practice. In some cases, this meant the guide noted the importance of conducting evaluation of program effectiveness. In other cases, it meant the guide discussed the evaluation data related to the recommendations for programs contained in that resource guide. We have found generally that evaluation is often a recommended or even a required component for implementing school- and community-based violence prevention initiatives, but there are few resources available to the non-researcher on how to do evaluation pragmatically. Rarely did inclusion of evaluation as a topic outline specific strategies for conducting evaluations of violence prevention programs or initiatives.

Finally, we considered whether the resource guide discussed ***barriers or challenges*** to implemention of the programs or strategies recommended and whether it offered additional resources or information to support the efforts recommended. No program or best practice can "come in a box" ready to be dropped into a school and be expected to produce immediate, effective results. Every school and community will have its own unique environments, circumstances and challenges that will have to be addressed for any violence prevention initiative to be successful.

Review of Selected Resource Guides

(1) ***Annual Report on School Safety, 1999***, U.S. Departments of Education and Justice, 1999 (#1 in Tables)

The *Annual Report* targets a broad-based audience, including school staff and administrators, mental health professionals, and juvenile justice and public health workers. It is specific to school settings. This resource guide is well organized and easy to read, with easily understood graphics and charts. It provides an in-depth assessment of factors specific to the prediction and prevention of violence, and to preparation for dealing with violence that occurs in schools.

One of the nice features of the *Report* is its highlight of relevant statistics and recent studies on the topic of school violence. For example, it points out that most school-related injuries are non-fatal and unintentional, not due to violence. The *Report* also summarizes

data showing that theft is the most common form of crime at school, and that more violent crime victimization for 12- to 18-year-olds occurs away from school than at school. In general, schools are relatively safe places with risk for homicide or suicide at school or at a school-related event less than one percent of all homicides and suicides. The *Annual Report* uses data to highlight the fact that middle school children and teachers suffer the highest rates of victimization from violence. In general, the *Report* does a solid job of explaining the nature and scope of school violence (from both a domestic and comparative international perspective) and of introducing the rationale for selected model programs in the context of what we know about school-associated risk for violence victimization and perpetration. The *Annual Report* was one of the few guides to discuss specifically the issue of hate crimes and harassment as elements of school violence.

The remainder of the *Report* summarizes information on model prevention programs in the areas of violence, substance use, and problem behavior, updating information from the 1998 *Annual Report*. It highlights specific grades (developmental appropriateness) and the target audience for the intervention, and provides information on ordering program materials. There are also several specific schools highlighted with brief summaries of their experiences in implementing best practice programs. These profiles could be particularly helpful to school personnel seeking examples of implementation success and resources to contact to discuss their challenges with implementation. The report lacks any direct or specific discussion, however, of potential barriers to implementation or guidance on how to overcome challenges associated with implementation.

One of the few weaknesses of the *Annual Report* is the lack of any substantive discussion of the role of staff identification, training, and support. Further, there is the implied but not formally stated implication that model programs are multi-system, comprehensive, and long term. There is a nice compendium of resources, including other organizations, web sites, online Federal documents and Federal resources for individuals interested in doing school-based violence prevention work.

(2) ***Best Practices of Youth Violence Prevention: A Sourcebook for Community Action***, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2000 (#3 in Tables)

This resource guide offers a thorough, easy-to-read, and well-organized discussion of the elements required to implement an effective, best practice violence prevention strategy. While the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is best known for its public health oriented work in violence prevention, its *Sourcebook* would appeal to a wide audience in schools and communities. It was prepared with the help of a national panel of study group members from diverse backgrounds and disciplines. This diversity shows in the final product.

The *Sourcebook*'s first chapter is a well-organized overview of tasks related to the planning, implementation, and evaluation of violence prevention interventions. The "cookbook" approach to describing the problem, selecting participants and appropriate settings, setting goals and objectives, etc. would appeal to the novice evaluator or community-based professional faced with the daunting task of developing an initiative from "scratch." Its expanded focus on staff selection, training, and support, and the need to garner local resources and support from the community, is particularly unique to these types of guides and very helpful.

The CDC's *Sourcebook* has a strong research and theoretical base for its focus on the specific "best practices" of parent-family based strategies, home visitation, social-cognitive strategies, and mentoring programs. The structure of the overview chapter is maintained in each of the sections on selected strategies, which is helpful to the reader who may skip that chapter to focus on a particular type of intervention. Each of the strategies in the *Sourcebook* is covered in-depth, with resources provided for additional information about each one, including program summaries and contacts. There is considerable space given to a listing of the Healthy Families American Research Network participants at the end of the section on home visitation strategies.

A strength of the *Sourcebook* is that staff selection, training, and support issues particular to each type of intervention strategy are included. For example, staffing issues are very different for implementing a home visitation program versus a mentoring program.

Identifying and appropriately training staff are important for fidelity of program implementation and sustainability of intervention effects over time. The guidelines offered in these arenas are practical and realistic.

While each section also mentions the need to integrate the strategy with other systems and to evaluate the intervention, these topics are covered only briefly. The continued emphasis on the need to consider maintenance of results after implementation is a plus, as more and more funders and Federal agencies are looking for long-term sustainability of programs after their initial support runs out.

To its credit, the *Sourcebook* also mentions the importance of considering cultural and demographic issues pertinent to each intervention, as well as environmental/contextual concerns when implementing a particular strategy in a community or school. These are not discussed in detail, however. This is unfortunate because these can be two significant barriers to successful implementation and sustainability over time. The *Sourcebook* also could have discussed more fully the issue of recruiting high-risk, resistant, mobile families into some of these types of initiatives and the potential impact on services, information gathering (evaluation), and policy. These criticisms are relatively minor, however, given the strong and thorough discussion (relative to other guides) of the other content areas discussed.

Two unique components of the *Sourcebook* that would be very helpful to school or community practitioners are the table on age-appropriate violence prevention curricula and a brief fact sheet on youth violence. While the statistics on youth violence are constantly changing, the fact sheet offers a framework for providing information to community leaders, funders, and policy makers to garner their support in implementing successful youth violence prevention initiatives.

(3) ***Conflict Resolution Education—A Guide to Implementing Programs in Schools, Youth Serving Organizations, and Community and Juvenile Justice Settings***, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and the U.S. Department of Education's Safe and Drug Free Schools, 1996 (#7 in Tables)

This *Guide* to implementing conflict resolution education (CRE) is clear about its focus and target audience. The entire *Guide* is dedi-

cated to the description and discussion of implementation of various forms of conflict resolution education in schools, communities, and juvenile justice settings. So, on the one hand, the *Guide* offers in-depth coverage of a very specific topic and type of intervention strategy, which is consistent with its intended purpose. On the other hand, it would not be very helpful to the practitioner interested in implementing a broad-based, multi-component intervention, unless one component of that intervention was conflict resolution education.

The *Guide* does a nice job of covering a wide range of topics related specifically to CRE, including the rationale for implementing CRE, and the theoretical underpinnings of the different models of CRE: process or mediation-based CRE programs and whole-classroom and schoolwide implementation models. It was initially exciting to find an entire chapter on evaluation listed in the table of contents, only to find that the chapter was on the evaluation findings relative to the effectiveness of CRE rather than information on how to evaluate CRE programs. In this regard, the conflict resolution *Guide* falls into the category of calling for the need to include evaluation, but providing little guidance regarding how to go about it. Another limitation is the lack of any discussion about the need to include CRE as a component of a more comprehensive violence prevention initiative. Few would argue that doing CRE alone would be an adequate long-term preventive intervention strategy.

The same criticism cannot be levied regarding developmental appropriateness of the intervention strategy. An entire chapter is devoted, albeit mostly in table format, to different abilities and processes involved in CRE, broken down into categories including early childhood to grade 2, grades 3 to 5, grades 6 to 8, and grades 9 to 12. A brief chapter is also included on how to establish a conflict resolution education program, including discussion of needs assessment, selection of an appropriate program or curriculum, and selection of staff and trainers. A large compendium of contact information, resources, a reading list, and a glossary would be very helpful to the practitioner committed to learning about CRE and implementing it in a community or school. The CRE *Guide* was one of the few resources to offer specific examples of forms for the various types of assessments discussed. Finally, testimonials from school and community providers on the value of CRE, examples of success stories of implementation and positive outcomes, and summaries of specific

projects and sites are scattered throughout the *Guide*. This information may prove both interesting and helpful to the practitioner looking beyond the quantitative data and research results to garner support for moving forward.

(4) ***Early Warning, Timely Response: A Guide to Safe Schools***, U.S. Department of Education, 1998 (#11 in Tables)

and

(5) ***Safeguarding Our Children: An Action Guide***, U.S. Departments of Education and Justice and American Institutes of Research, 2000 (#12 in Tables)

These two resource guides are combined in this review because *Safeguarding Our Children* was specifically developed as the implementation guide to *Early Warning, Timely Response. Early Warning* was developed in response to a presidential initiative following the school shootings in Eugene, Oregon. As such, its focus was on helping educators and others with "what to look for," the early warning signs that relate to violence and other troubling behaviors and "what to do," the "action steps that school communities can take to prevent violence and other troubling behaviors,, to intervene and get help for troubled children, and to respond to school violence when it occurs." The majority of *Early Warning* is focused on the "what to look for" issue, with a couple of sections at the end initially addressing "what to do." *Safeguarding Our Children* is fully focused on answering the "what to do" question with respect to targeted, at-risk youth who have the potential for engaging in violent behavior.

Both of these guides, while targeting school staff, would be useful for anyone working in the area of violence prevention. They are based on the premise that school safety plans need to be grounded in research-based best practices. A strong underlying theme is that effective action plans are strategic, coordinated, and comprehensive. Clearly schools do not operate in a vacuum outside of their community and environment. Similarly, support for students needs to occur both within the school and outside the school doors in families and communities.

While *Early Warning* lays out a myriad of risk factors and red flags to look out for, there is an appropriate and consistent plea not to use

the list as a means to label youngsters or to use the warning signs as a way to fit children into a specific profile. While the focus for both resource guides is on how to identify and intervene with potentially violent youth, they place targeted interventions in the context of a developmentally appropriate long-term intervention plan that includes universal prevention for all students, not just those at risk for violence. Throughout both guides there is also a consistent theme of early intervention in a proactive way, rather than waiting to react to crises.

Safeguarding Our Children focuses on creating links between teams that address individual student problem behavior (a teacher, principal, and mental health professional), a schoolwide team, and a larger student support team. While this specific structure may not work in all communities, a strength of the guide is its attention to student mental health needs and the role of such attention in violence prevention, as well as the recognition of the need for multiple support systems both within and outside the school. A brief sidebar outlines evaluation criteria to help schools identify a program appropriate to their setting. This includes a consideration of outcome evidence, cost, implications for personnel and staffing, diversity, and flexibility. Other than this brief mention, however, evaluation of program effectiveness and staff training issues are not foci of these two resource guides.

The wealth of practical information contained in these guides is usable largely because they are well organized and clearly written. The resource and action guides offer a nice example of brevity without sacrificing attention to the important details or the need to offer comprehensive coverage of a topic. A particularly nice feature of *Early Warning* is the inclusion of "Action Steps" for students, an "Action Planning Checklist," and a "Crisis Procedure" checklist. *Safeguarding Our Children* also contains detailed descriptions of different types of programs and specific guides around developing referral procedures and intervening with high-risk youth.

The last chapter of *Safeguarding Our Children* discusses many pragmatic issues involved in creating and implementing a comprehensive plan, including the need to include community members on the schoolwide team and to gather appropriate resources to help ensure long-term success. Both guides contain sections of online and other Federal resources for more information, as well as specific contact information on the programs described.

Of all the resource guides we reviewed, the combination of *Early Warning* and *Safeguarding Our Children* provided the most comprehensive, easy to read, practicable guide to dealing with potentially violent youth in school and community settings.

(6) ***Violence Prevention and Safe Schools***, UCLA Center for Mental Health in Schools, 2000 (#30 in Tables)

The strength of this guide from the Center's Clearinghouse on Violence Prevention and Safe Schools is the breadth and depth of its information on violence prevention, particularly with respect to mental health issues for young people. Unfortunately this is also its major weakness. Specifically, the packet contains a plethora of information, most of it gleaned from other sources and documents. Several pieces were reprinted from other resource guides (many contained in this review) or downloaded from the Internet. Much of the information is independently valuable, but only the Table of Contents connects the information in any coherent way.

The value of the guide in terms of breadth of information and variety of resources is diminished by its lack of a coherent strategy for its presentation or integration of the material. Many of the resources and much of the information are not placed in any context. If this were the first guide that a reader came across, and if the reader depended on it for help in implementing a violence prevention strategy, the reader could become easily overwhelmed by the volume of different pieces of information. However, if a practitioner had only one or two resources available and were looking for lots of other resources, the guide might prove helpful. The challenge would be in knowing specifically what information was needed (e.g., strategies to deal with angry or aggressive youth). The patient reader would also need to have the perseverance to look elsewhere for additional information on implementation strategies.

The guide does provide much useful information. It summarizes the American Psychological Association's recommendations for violence prevention, including its recommendations on public policy and funding. There is an extensive table on exemplary and promising programs reprinted from the Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS) and the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP). The articles on anger control, classroom management with disruptive

and violent students, bullying, hate crimes, and sexual harassment (the latter two topics rarely addressed in any guide) could prove extremely helpful to the classroom teacher. There is little guidance, however, on what to do with all this information, how to compare or prioritize all the different sets of recommendations, or how to mediate potentially conflicting information on specific issues.

In sum, *Violence Prevention and Safe Schools* contains a great deal of valuable information, much of it culled from other existing resource guides and Federal reports. It is a difficult read, however, because there is little rationale for the selection of materials or any attempt to organize or integrate overlapping information. For the new reader, this guide could be overwhelming. For the experienced reader who knows what to look for, it can lead the way to a wealth of helpful information in the quest to develop an effective violence prevention plan.

(7) ***The Role of Education in a System of Care: Effectively Serving Children with Emotional or Behavioral Disorders*** **(Volume III)**, American Institutes for Research, 1999 (#31 in Tables)

Volume III in the Center for Effective Collaboration and Practice's Systems of Care series on promising practices in children's mental health focuses on the efforts, experiences, and outcomes of three urban sites funded by the Community Mental Health Service for Children and Their Families Program (CMHS): South Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; East Baltimore, Maryland; and a statewide program in Rhode Island. Each of the sites was expected to implement a system of care with an emphasis on school-based mental health services that coordinates with other community partners. The volume describes the projects and experiences of each of these sites, and also provides some essential cross-site findings and lessons from these and other CMHS project sites. One section covers strategies to overcome potential barriers to implementation. These are major strengths of this volume. In particular, the chapter on overcoming barriers is filled with practical information on topics not normally covered in these resource guides, such as handling teacher contract issues when teachers are involved in the implementation of an intervention or have to participate in significant training. Another plus is acknowledgement that building principals largely control what

goes on in their school, so upper level administrative support for an intervention program, while helpful, is not enough for effective implementation in every building.

The guide focuses on dealing effectively with children who have serious emotional or behavioral disorders, the 10 to 15 percent of the youth who may account for as much as 80 percent of problems in a school. It begins with a thorough review of the literature, both research and practice based, and a clear rationale for targeting SED (Seriously Emotionally Disturbed) youth through a system of care that has schools at its core. The approach advocated finds its framework in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and in the notion that mental health services should be school based and involve collaborative, community-linked services for SED youth. The two main principles underlying school-based systems of care are that (1) services are child- and family-driven, and (2) cultural competency means meeting the needs of diverse clients.

The guide offers both breadth and depth of coverage of the issues regarding intervention with students who have severe emotional or behavioral problems in school. It provides very detailed descriptions of specific programs, as well as the rationale for advocating for mental health clinicians in schools. A strength of the effort is its consistent support for mental health services as a complement to schoolwide preventive interventions as well as the need for multi-system collaboration and ongoing support for children, families, and teachers. While the volume is lengthy, it is generally well organized and easy to read. The program descriptions are interspersed with staff observations and testimonials about their experiences and their particular role in the system of care. Both types of information may be helpful to implementing practitioners at other sites.

While each of these selected sites was in an urban setting, and some issues are unique to those settings, many of the lessons learned and barriers to overcome would apply to suburban and smaller rural communities, because the children face many of the same issues, and intervention with SED youth would still require some of the same elements of a collaborative system of care between the school system and the community.

If this volume has a weakness, it is in its cursory discussion of staff training issues and the lack of much discussion about evaluation of intervention outcomes. It should be noted, however, that evaluation

of program interventions as a task is not one of the intended goals of the volume; rather, the presence of positive program outcome data is contained in descriptions of activities and components throughout the volume. The volume would be very helpful to the practitioner interested in implementing these types of services for SED children, but not very helpful to the evaluator charged with setting up a system to assess program outcomes.

The volume includes appendices with program contact information and materials as well as some helpful guidelines for provision of in-school wraparound services and some lessons learned (East Baltimore site).

Summary

There has been a significant increase in recent years in the number of publications focusing on school- and community-based youth violence prevention and intervention services. Most of the resource guides developed focus on a very specific population (e.g., Seriously Emotionally Disturbed or targeted, at-risk youth) or on a specific approach (e.g., conflict resolution education). A few resource guides attempt to provide a more comprehensive framework for preventive interventions while focusing on specific types of best practices (e.g., CDC's *Sourcebook*) or on a specific population of youth (e.g., *Early Warning, Timely Response* and *Safeguarding Our Children*). There are a few guides that have attempted to review many programs and rate their content and applicability to violence prevention (e.g., *Safe Schools/Safe Students Guide*). There are many new guides available to the practitioner charged with developing a violence prevention initiative. The challenge is to start with the guide, or, in some cases, the chapter within a resource guide, that will provide an overview of a comprehensive, multi-system, flexible approach to violence prevention and the rationale and research base for taking such an approach. The CDC *Sourcebook* and *Early Warning Action Guide* would be particularly useful in this regard. The next step would be to examine guides that review the types of programs already in place (to determine how they might fit into a new model) or guides that examine programs that might be productively added to the existing system of care (e.g., adding a middle school-focused intervention to strong elementary school programs). Another strategy is to seek out a resource

guide that focuses specifically on a target population or setting or on the type of intervention strategy that may be implemented in a school or community.

One weakness of existing guides is their limited discussion of evaluation and its role in determining program effectiveness. This limitation occurs on two fronts. First, there exists a lack of discussion of evaluation outcome or process data that can help the reader make relative comparisons of program effectiveness or potential when choosing from a myriad of possibilities. Of course there are some exceptions to this limitation, but even the guides that include evaluation data as a criterion of assessment are either limited by a general lack of good evaluative data on any program (e.g., *Safe Schools/Safe Students*) or have adopted an extremely stringent set of criteria for best practices which limits the program options for a community looking to implement a new strategy (e.g., *Blueprints for Violence Control*).

The second major limitation on evaluation is the lack of attention to ways to evaluate a program or set of programs as part of a violence prevention initiative. Many resource guides state that evaluation is important. Consistently, guides state that evaluative data should be used to modify program implementation and can be very valuable to potential funders and to the sustainability of programs over time, but few guides provide any pragmatic guidance for the non-researcher about how they might even conduct basic evaluation of their intervention. A notable exception to this is the *Evaluation Handbook* developed by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation (1998). The *Handbook* is generally well organized and easy to read, and information is presented so that someone with only basic knowledge of research or research methods could benefit and use the information to address some basic evaluative questions or strategies.

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W.K. Kellogg Foundation. (1998). *W.K. Kellogg Foundation evaluation handbook.* Battle Creek, MI: Author.

Table 1: School Violence Resource Guides

#	Guide	Focus	Target Audiences
1	*Annual Report on School Safety, 1999.* 1999. U.S. Departments of Education and Justice. Washington, DC. (ED 436 860) www.ed.gov/PDFDocs/InterimAR.pdf	Safe School Environment Violence, Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention and Intervention Programs Mental Health Prevention and Intervention Services Early Childhood Psychosocial and Emotional Development Programs Educational Reform Safe School Policies	School District Administrators, Staff Mental Health Professionals Law Enforcement Students, Families Juvenile Justice Officials
2	*Achieving and Measuring Community Outcomes: Challenges, Issues, Some Approaches.* 1999. United Way of America Alexandria, VA. National.unitedway.org/outcomes/cmtyout1.pdf	General Evaluation	School District Administrators, Staff Project Evaluators
3	*Best Practices of Youth Violence Prevention: A Sourcebook For Community Action.* 2000. T.N. Thornton, C.A. Craft, L.L. Dahlberg, B.S. Lynch, & K. Baer. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center For Injury Prevention and Control. Atlanta, GA. www.cdc.gov/ncipc/dvp/bestpractices.htm	Evaluation Strategies Parent- and Family-Based, Home-Visiting, Social-Cognitive, Mentoring Strategies	Project Evaluators
4	*Blueprints for Violence Prevention* (Vols. 1-10). 1998-1999. D.S. Elliott (Ed.). Venture Publishing. Boulder, CO. ($15.00) www.Colorado.EDU/cspv/blueprints/model/Default.htm	Drug Abuse and Violence Prevention and Intervention Programs for Children and Families	Community Agencies General Public
5	*Combating Fear and Restoring Safety in Schools.* Juvenile Justice Bulletin. 1998. J.L. Arnette & M.C. Walsleben. U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. Washington, DC. (ED 420 121) www.ncjrs.org/pdffiles/167888.pdf	Relationship between Truancy and School-Associated Fear and Intimidation	School District Administrators, Staff Students, Families General Public Law Enforcement
6	*Comprehensive Framework for School Violence Prevention.* 1999. Hamilton Fish National Institute on School and Community Violence. Washington, DC. www.nassp.org/[illegible].pdf	School Violence Prevention Action Plan Development and Implementation	School District Administrators, Staff General Public

7	*Conflict Resolution Education: A Guide to Implementing Programs in Schools, Youth-Serving Organizations, and Community and Juvenile Justice Settings.* 1996. D. Crawford & R. Bodine. U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program. Washington, DC. (ED 404 426) www.ncjrs.org/pdffiles/conflic.pdf	Youth and School Violence Conflict Resolution Strategies	School District Administrators, Staff Juvenile Justice Officials Community Agencies
8	*Creating Safe and Drug-Free Schools: An Action Guide.* 1996. U.S. Department of Education. U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. Washington, DC. (ED 406 641) www.ncjrs.org/pdffiles/safescho.pdf	Development of School Safety Plan and Evaluation (Law Enforcement Focus)	School District Administrators, Staff Community, City, State, National Leaders Students, Families
9	*Crisis Counseling for a Quality School Community.* 1998. L.L. Palmatier (Ed.). Accelerated Development. Bristol, PA. (ED 431 143) ($40)	Transformation of Coercive School Norms Relationship-Focused Counseling	School District Administrators, Staff Mental Health Professionals
10	*"Dangerous Schools and What You Can Do About Them."* March 2000. I.A. Hyman & P.A. Snook. *Phi Delta Kappan, 81*(7), pp. 489-98, 500-01. (EJ 601 254)	Educator Violence Toward Students	School District Administrators, Staff
11	*Early Warning, Timely Response: A Guide to Safe Schools.* 1998. K. Dwyer, D. Osher, & C. Warger. U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC. (ED 418 372) ed.gov/offices/OSERS/OSEP/earlywrn.html	School Violence Prevention	School District Administrators, Staff Mental Health Professionals Students, Families
12	*Safeguarding Our Children: An Action Guide.* 2000. K. Dwyer & D. Osher. U.S. Departments of Education and Justice and American Institutes of Research. Washington, DC. (ED 440 327) ed.gov/offices/OSERS/OSEP/ActionGuide/Action_Guide.pdf	School Violence: Design and Implementation of Safety Plans	School District Administrators, Staff Mental Health Professional Students, Families

13	***The Effectiveness of School-based Interventions for Preventing and Reducing Violence*** (Final Report). **1999.** J.H. Derzon, S.J. Wilson, & C.A. Cunningham. Vanderbilt Institute for Public Policy Studies, Center for Evaluation Research and Methodology. Nashville, TN.	Review of Experimentally Designed Studies Focused on School-Based Interventions for Preventing Violence	Project Evaluators
14	"Federal Activities Addressing Violence in Schools." April 2000. L.C. Barrios. *Journal of School Health, 70*(4), pp. 119-140. www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dash/violence/violence activities.pdf	School Violence	School District Administrators, Staff Community Agencies Mental Health Professionals Law Enforcement Project Evaluators Students, Families
15	*Guide for Implementing the Comprehensive Strategy for Serious, Violent, and Chronic Juvenile Offenders.* 1995. J.C. Howell (Ed.). U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. Washington, DC. www.ncjrs.org/pdffiles/guide.pdf	Juvenile Violence Strategic Plan to Address Juvenile Violence	Community, City, State, National Leaders
16	*Human Development and Violence Prevention: A Focus on Youth.* 1997. K.R. Williams, N.G. Guerra, & D.S. Elliott. Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence. Boulder, CO. (ED 415 319) ($10)	Youth Violence Prevention	Project Evaluators School District Administrators, Staff
17	*Indicators of School Crime and Safety, 1998.* 1998. P. Kaufman, X. Chen, S.P. Choy, K.A. Chandler, C.D. Chapman, M.R. Rand, & C. Ringel. U.S. Departments of Education and Justice. Washington, DC. (ED 423 616) www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/iscs98.htm	School Crime and Safety Data and Statistics	School District Administrators, Staff Community Agencies General Public
18	"Making Schools Safer and Violence Free." March 1997. H.M. Walker & F.M. Gresham. *Intervention in School & Clinic, 32*(4), pp. 199-204. (EJ 539 260)	School Safety Issues Violence Prevention Strategies	School District Administrators, Staff

19	*Preventing and Countering School-Based Harassment: A Resource Guide for K-12 Educators.* 1997. M. Steineger. Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, Equity Center. Portland, OR. www.nwrel.org/cnorse/booklets/harassment/index.html	Strategies for Preventing and Responding to Harassment	School District Administrators, Staff Students, Families General Public
20	*Preventing Crime: What Works, What Doesn't, What's Promising.* 1998. L.W. Sherman, D.C. Gottfredson, D.L. MacKenzie, J. Eck, P. Reuter, & S.D. Bushway. U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice. Washington, DC. (ED 423 321) www.ncjrs.org/works/wholedoc.htm.	Evaluation of Youth Crime and the Effect of Intervention Prevention Programs on Youth Violence Project Evaluators	Law Enforcement Community, City, State, National Leaders
21	*Preventing Youth Violence.* 2000. SAFE USA. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Washington, DC. www.cdc.gov/safeusa/youthviolence.htm	Youth Violence Prevention Tips	School District Administrators, Staff Students, Families
22	*Protecting Students from Harassment and Hate Crime: A Guide for Schools.* 1999. U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, and National Association of Attorneys General. Washington, DC. (ED 431 246) www.ed.gov/pubs/Harassment/	Strategies to Prevent and Respond to Harassment	School District Administrators, Staff
23	*Safe Schools: A Handbook for Violence Prevention.* 1995. R.D. Stephens. National Educational Service. Bloomington, IN. (ED 419 272) ($25)	School Safety Violence Prevention Design, Implementation, and Evaluation of Safe School Plan	School District Administrators, Staff
24	*Safe Schools, Safe Students: A Guide to Violence Prevention Strategies, Programs, Policies, and Environmental Changes.* 1998. Drug Strategies. Washington, DC. (ED 416 435) ($17.95)	School Violence Prevention Strategies Assessment of School-Based Programs Comprehensive Community-Based Programs	School District Administrators, Staff Project Evaluators

25	*School and Community Interventions to Prevent Serious and Violent Offending* Juvenile Justice Bulletin 1999. R.F. Catalano, R. Loeber, & K.C. McKinney. U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Washington, DC. (ED 435 082) www.ncjrs.org/html/ojjdp/jjbul9910_1/contents.html	Prevention and Intervention of Serious Violent Juvenile Offending	School District Administrators, Staff Community, City, State, National Leaders
26	*The School Shooter: A Threat Assessment Perspective* 2000. M.E. O'Toole FBI Academy, National Center for the Analysis of Violent Crime, Critical Incident Response Group Quantico, VA. www.fbi.gov/publications/school/school2.pdf	Prevention of Violence Through Threat Assessment	School District Administrators, Staff Mental Health Professionals Law Enforcement
27	*Violence and the Prevention of Violence* 1995. L.I. Adler & F.L. Denmark (Eds.) Praeger Publishers Westport, CT. ($62.95)	Causes of Crime Violence Toward and By Children	School District Administrators, Staff Domestic Violence
28	*Violence in American Schools: A New Perspective* 1998. D.S. Elliott, B.A. Hamburg, & K.R. Williams, (Eds.) Cambridge University Press New York, NY. ($21.95)	Description and Evaluation of Strategies for the Prevention and Treatment of School Violence	School District Administrators, Staff Community, City, State, National Leaders Students General Public
29	*Violence in American Schools* *A Practical Guide for Counselors* 2000. D.S. Sandhu & C.B. Aspy (Eds.) American Counseling Association Alexandria, VA. (ED 442 044) ($29.95)	At Risk Students School Violence Prevention Strategies	Mental Health Professionals
30	*Violence Prevention and Safe Schools.* 2000. UCLA Center for Mental Health in Schools. UCLA, Department of Psychology. School Mental Health Project. Los Angeles, CA. smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/violence/violence.pdf	Violence Prevention Curricula School Programs School-Community Partnerships for Safe Schools	Mental Health Professionals Community, City, State, National Leaders School District Administrators, Staff

31	*The Role of Education in a System of Care: Effectively Serving Children with Emotional or Behavioral Disorders. Systems of Care: Promising Practices in Children's Mental Health* (Volume III). 1999. D.W. Woodruff, D. Osher, D., C.C. Hoffman, A. Gruner, M.A. King, S.T. Snow, & J.C. McIntire. American Institutes for Research. Washington, DC. (ED 429 421) air.org/cecp/promisingpractices/1998monographs/vol3.pdf	Descriptions of Three Urban Sites for a Comprehensive School-Based System of Care for Serious Emotionally Disturbed Children	School District Administrators, Staff Mental Health Professionals
32	*Youth and Violence—Medicine, Nursing, and Public Health: Connecting the Dots to Prevent Violence* 2000. Commission for the Prevention of Youth Violence, American Medical Association Chicago, IL. www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/category/3536.html	Identification of Populations At Risk Community Based Youth Violence Prevention Strategies/Interventions	Community Agencies Mental Health Professionals Community, City, State, National Leaders Nurses General Public
33	*Youth Violence: Prevention, Intervention, and Social Policy* 1999. D.J. Flannery & C.R. Huff (Eds.) American Psychiatric Press, Inc. Washington, DC. ($49.50)	Prevention and Intervention Strategies for Reducing Youth Violence	Mental Health Professionals School District Administrators, Staff Nurses

Shaded areas indicate in-depth review of the guide in the text.

Table 2: School Violence Resource Guide Content Checklist

Guide Number	School Violence Statistics	Developmental Focus	Program Review	School-Based Curriculum	School-Community Partnerships	Safe School Planning	Evaluation	Agencies/ Organizati-
1	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
2			✓		✓		✓	
3	✓	✓	✓				✓✓	✓
4		✓	✓				✓✓	✓
5	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
6		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
7		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
8			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
9	✓	✓						
10	✓			✓		✓		
11		✓		✓		✓		
12		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
13			✓	✓			✓✓	
14	✓		✓					✓
15	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
16	✓	✓					✓	
17	✓							✓
18	✓	✓	✓			✓		
19	✓			✓	✓	✓		✓
20		✓	✓	✓			✓✓	✓
21	✓		✓					✓
22	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
23	✓				✓	✓	✓✓	✓
24	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
25		✓	✓		✓	✓		✓
26				✓	✓	✓		✓
27	✓	✓						
28	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
29	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓
30	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
31	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
32	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
33	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	

Key

Guide number: *Reference to number assigned to school violence resource guides on Table 1.*

School Violence Statistics: *Inclusion of school violence data-to-date.*

Developmental Focus: *Attention to age appropriateness of the information.*

Program Review: *Mention of specific school- or community-based programs for specific interventions.*

School-Based Curriculum: *Inclusion of curriculum.*

School-Community Partnerships: *Steps to take in building partnerships.*

Safe School Planning: *Steps in planning.*

Evaluation: *Information on performing an evaluation of school district projects. (Double check indicates in-depth coverage.)*

Agencies/Organizations: *References to organizations outside of schools that assist in violence prevention.*

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Risk Factors	Protective Factors	Targeted Youth Services	Challenges to Implementation	Intervention Strategies	Policy Implications	Staff Training	Other Resources/ References	Guide Num
				✓			✓	1
			✓					2
				✓			✓	3
✓	✓			✓			✓	4
				✓	✓	✓	✓	5
		✓		✓		✓		6
✓	✓			✓		✓	✓	7
		✓		✓			✓	8
				✓			✓	9
					✓		✓	10
✓		✓		✓	✓		✓	11
✓		✓		✓		✓	✓	12
				✓			✓	13
								14
✓	✓						✓	15
✓	✓			✓	✓			16
							✓	17
✓	✓			✓			✓	18
				✓	✓	✓	✓	19
							✓	20
							✓	21
				✓			✓	22
				✓	✓	✓	✓	23
				✓	✓	✓	✓	24
✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	25
✓					✓		✓	26
							✓	27
✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	28
✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	29
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	30
		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	31
✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	32
				✓	✓		✓	33

Risk Factors: *Specification of factors.*

Protective Factors: *Specification of factors.*

Targeted Youth Services: *Information on specific violence prevention strategies for targeted youth.*

Challenges to Implementation: *Discussion of barriers to intervention programs.*

Intervention Strategies: *Descriptions of strategies.*

Policy Implications: *Impact of violence prevention interventions on policy.*

Staff Training: *Information on its importance.*

Other Resources/References: *Inclusion of information on additional resources.*

Shaded areas indicate in-depth review of the guide in the text. Double checks indicate separate coverage of topic.

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Contributor Biographies

Morton Deutsch, Ph.D., is Professor Emeritus and Director Emeritus of the International Center for Cooperation and Conflict Resolution at Teachers College, Columbia University. He is well known for his pioneering studies in intergroup relations, cooperation-competition, conflict resolution, social conformity, and the social psychology of justice.

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Megan Seaman is a research assistant at the Institute for the Study and Prevention of Violence at Kent State University. Her research interests lie in the areas of child and family relationships, violence exposure/victimization and mental health, and violence prevention and intervention.

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